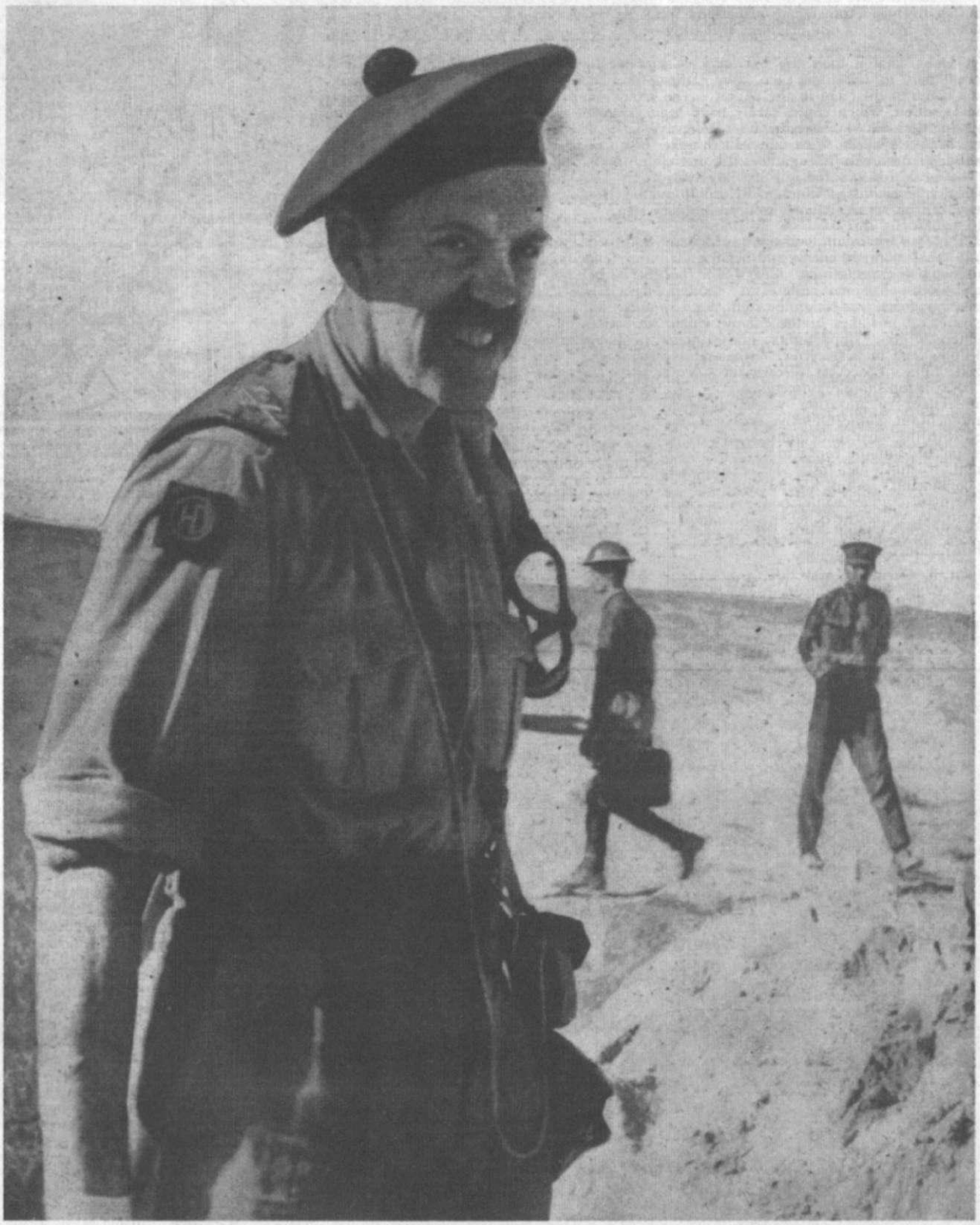
Vol 7 The War Illustrated N° 162

Edited by Sir John Hammerton

SIXPENCE SEPTEMBER 3, 1943



COMMANDER OF THE 51st (HIGHLAND) DIVISION, Major-General Douglas Wimberley, D.S.O., M.C., hails from Inverness. His men, mostly desert veterans, have been winning new laurels since they landed in Sicily, as part of the 8th Army, on invasion day, July 10, 1943. They were among the first to enter Catania on August 5, having fought magnificently through every stage of the great advance. Maj.-Gen. Wimberley won his D.S.O. in the fighting against Rommel, and his M.C. in the 1914-1918 war. *Photo, British Official*

THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

WHEN I wrote last it was clear that the initiative had passed to the Russians and that the Germans were in danger of a major disaster if they decided to cling to Orel at all costs ; the capture of Orel constitutes a notable Russian victory, and though the German retreat was carried out skilfully it cost them heavy losses and necessitated the use of all available reserves to keep the Russian pursuit in check. Doubtless this involved a transfer of formations from the Byelgorod front and gave Zhukov a chance of delivering one of those brilliantly timed blows which had been such a feature of his winter offensive.

It looks as if it took the Germans by surprise and the resulting break-through has placed them in a position even more critical than it was when the exceptionally early thaw came to their aid in the winter. The attack cannot have been merely a brilliant improvisation, which could hardly have been exploited so rapidly and fully. But it is amazing that Zhukov after the great defensive battle waged for the Kursk salient should have been left with a force sufficient to seize the opportunity. It will be disappointing if the Byelgorod break-through does not presage ultimate decisive victory.

The week that saw the fall of Orel, Byelgorod, Catania and Munda may prove to have opened up new vistas which will lead to modification of Allied plans. The capture of Sicily can be regarded only as a preliminary step.

SMOLENSK, BRYANSK AND KHARKOV were by August 20, 1943, all menaced by determined Soviet thrusts following the triumphant capture of Orel and Byelgorod fifteen days before. On August 23 the Germans abandoned Kharkov. *By courtesy of The Daily Telegraph*

RUSSIA Once again Russia has surprised both the enemy and her friends in falsifying all expectations. Last winter the initial success of her offensive, though surprisingly great, was to some extent due to the strategical mistakes of the enemy which presented a great opportunity, and winter conditions were in her favour. What really amazed military observers all over the world was the astonishing competence of the administrative organization which enabled the momentum of the offensive to be maintained with the most inadequate communications, far beyond the range at which it was thought it must be lost. The campaign gave convincing proof of how formidable the Red Army was under winter conditions ; but it did little to shake the belief that in summer the Reichswehr would assert its superiority when it regained its mobility.

When the German Kursk offensive opened there was an almost universal expectation that the belief would be justified, and the complete failure of the attack, in spite of the formidable character of the force employed, had to be explained by the admitted courage and tenacity of Russian troops in defence. Nevertheless, the success of the defence, especially after the defences in the Byelgorod area had been penetrated, caused great surprise ; and for the first time German invincibility in offensive action became open to doubt. Few, however, believed that the Russians would be capable of repeating in the summer their winter successes.

The comparatively slow progress of the attack on the obviously exposed Orel salient seemed to indicate the limits of their offensive capacity and gave little hope that they would ever be capable of breaking through the main German defensive positions. Even so, the fact that the Germans, in spite of great efforts, were unable to bring the Russians to a standstill caused surprise.

Then came the greatest surprise of all — the break-through at Byelgorod followed by its rapid exploitation. Here was something entirely new, vitally affecting prospects in the remainder of the summer campaigning season. It was a success which could only be explained by a definite superiority of the Russians both in generalship and in power of manoeuvre.

It could hardly be argued that the Germans must have been caught on the rebound, after the failure of their offensive, for Byelgorod had for months been a strongly-defended position and formed an ideal rallying line. Even if the Germans had weakened their hold on it by transferring picked formations to the Orel front, there should have been ample reserves available to relieve them ; for there must certainly have been a considerable concentration of less mobile troops assembled to support the original offensive spearhead. The break-through was effected, therefore, not at a weak but at a strong point in the enemy's front, and was, consequently, all the more important in its implications. It was a soft spot, only in the sense that a successful break-through reached a particularly sensitive area in the enemy's rearward organizations, and had major strategical results.

When the Byelgorod break-through was followed by the penetration of the German defences between Smolensk and Bryansk, again a sector where they might have been expected to be exceptionally strong, a still further proof was given of Russian offensive power.

In the winter campaign, when the German situation was at its most critical, the Russians were desperately handicapped

SOVIET ANTI-TANK ARTILLERY, vanguard of Gen. Rokossovsky's army, at the gates of war-devastated Orel. The city—key to Moscow and second only to Smolensk in importance as a citadel—was relieved by the Russians after 23 days' costly fighting. **(See also pp. 204-5.)** **Evidence of horrors perpetrated on the civil population by the Nazis during their 22 months' hold on the city is reported to rival that at Lidice and Krasnodar.** *Radio photograph by Pictorial Press*

BRITISH GUNS IN ACTION among the lava-rock foothills of Mount Etna. The fall of Randazzo on August 13, 1943 and Castiglione on August 16 (see map below) completed the Allied encirclement of the mountain, last pivot of the Axis defences in Sicily. *Photo, U.S. Official*

in their attempts to give the decisive blow by the immense length their lines of communication, entirely dependent on motor transport, had reached, and by the retarding effects of snow on movement. The weight of their forward thrusts was consequently reduced. Moreover, the approaching thaw gave the Germans prospects of a period of respite, and encouraged them to hold on at all costs to dangerously exposed positions, rather than attempt difficult retreat which might otherwise have been inevitable.

Now the Russian base of operations has been immensely advanced and has a restored railway system to supply it. They are, therefore, in a much better position to exploit initial successes, both by weight of blows and by speed of movement over firm ground; and the Germans can expect no respite.

With the initiative lost, and their lateral lines of communication threatened, the German problem, always inherent in defensive operations, must be that of moving reserves to the threatened points, and unless they can concentrate reserves for counter-attack on a great scale their situation is extremely precarious. If they are compelled now to carry out a withdrawal to a shorter defensive line, the evacuation of warlike stores from their forward areas will be immensely difficult. Moreover, they must be saved, not merely to prevent them falling into Russian hands but in order to fill the depots on a new defensive line. It is highly improbable that any position far in the rear is well stocked, and to stock it rapidly from home bases would, on account of the great distances and limited railway facilities, be a slow business. Retreat on a large scale would in particular involve an immense expenditure of petrol supplies difficult to meet.

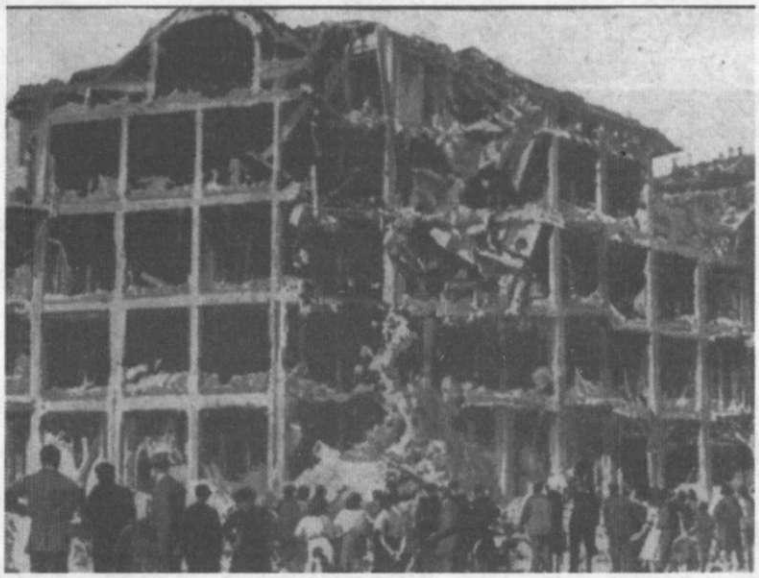
SICILY The capture of Sicily, giving us practically complete control of the Mediterranean route, proving the practicability of large-scale amphibious operations and providing us with new air bases, was undoubtediy a vitally important preliminary step. There has been some disappointment that, during the time required to clear the island, further operations for which preparations had obviously been made were not undertaken. It is, however, impossible for anyone without the fullest knowledge of resources available, of the political factors involved, and of the full scope of the Allied plans, to offer any explanation of the apparent inaction.

The occupation of the island has clearly caused a notable disturbance of the dispositions of the enemy's troops; and it must be realized that it would have been quite impracticable to forestall the German occupation of the Lombardy plain. Whether it was ever the intention of the Allies to undertake a complete occupation of Italy, involving immense demands of shipping, is, I think, doubtful; and it is possible that the success of the Russian offensive may make it less, rather than more, advisable.

The actual fighting in the island followed the course expected, once it was apparent that the enemy, though he had failed to counter-attack in strength, was determined to play for time. The terrain gave exceptional opportunities for delaying action and made it impossible to take full advantage of the Allied superiority in numbers and armament. Only highly-trained and determined infantry could have overcome the especially difficult obstacles encountered.

Catania might possibly have been taken by a frontal attack, under cover of an artillery barrage; but the cost would have been heavy and the chances of failure were considerable. In any case, the greater portion of the garrison would almost certainly have escaped to continue their resistance in the defiles beyond. It was, therefore, in this case, undoubtedly correct to evict the enemy by manoeuvre.

What the enemy's object was in fighting so desperately for time is still not quite clear. Possibly it was merely to gain time to assemble craft for evacuation, and for the concentration of anti-aircraft defences; but probably there were other political and strategic motives which presently will be revealed in yet more triumphant action.



DEVASTATION IN MILAN, wrought by the R.A.F. on the night of August 7, 1943, is typified by this huge block of buildings utterly wrecked. Three further attacks were carried out in 72 hours, August 13-15. "One gigantic ruin" is an eye witness description of the city's centre. *Photo, Planet News*

NEARING THE END IN SICILY. By August 16, 1943, Taormina was taken by the British 8th Army, the U.S. 7th Army were on the outskirts of Milazzo, and Allied units were advancing from Milazzo on Messina which fell on August 17. *By courtesy of The Daily Telegraph*

Our Infantry Show Their Mettle in Sicily

BRITISH FOOT-SLOGGERS soon found ample scope in Sicily for demonstration of their superb skill, daring and endurance. The mountainous interior of the island presented a problem with which they alone could deal—for after all the bombing and strafing from the air had been completed it was the men on foot who had to effect the actual conquest of town after town.

Up steeply-rising hill roads, across gorges and swift-flowing rivers they had to fight their way almost yard by yard, exposed to enemy snipers and strongpoints favoured by the terrain.

What Gen. Montgomery called "the wonderful feat of arms" by the 78th Division at Centuripe (see also page 199) was one of the infantry's most remarkable achievements in the course of the whole Sicilian campaign.

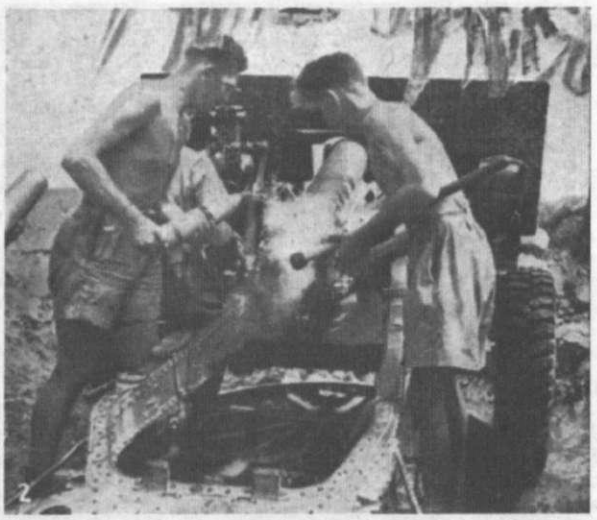
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

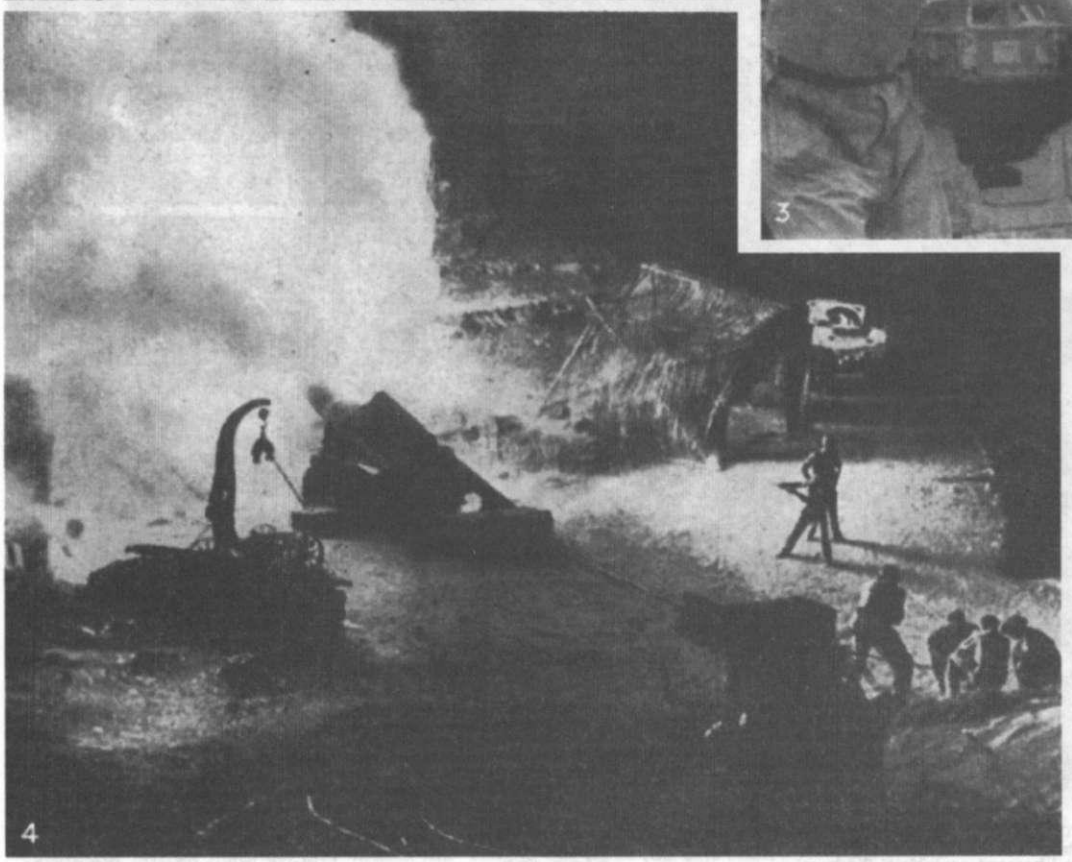
EIGHTH ARMY troops are shown tackling a Sicilian railway station converted into a strong point by the enemy.

From the shelter of a stationary truck (1) a Bren gunner fires at the defenders strongly entrenched in the station. Then comes the moment for a bayonet charge (2). Foothold gained on the platform, bolted doors are smashed open with rifle butts (3) and skulking Nazis routed out. The initial phase of this vigorous action is illustrated in page 224.

"Mopping up" is one of the urgent jobs requiring attention after a town has been taken. No sooner had Catania fallen to units of the 8th Army on August 5, 1943, than our infantry set about mopping up amid the ruins of the devastated city (4). They found no Germans: the enemy had pulled out the night before, having spent most of the previous three days mining buildings, including the post office, the Bank of Sicily and a big hotel. See also eye witness story in page 220.

British Artillerymen Back Up the Infantry





A GUN FOR EVERY JOB, expertly handled, was a major factor in our Sicilian triumph. Varied terrain called for a variety of artillery.

Working a self-propelled gun (1) is a manoeuvre calling for agility and alertness, exemplified by this gun-crew, all "on their toes."

Following the taking of the Primo Sole bridge (see p. 207) the 8th Army found progress hampered by the Germans' 88-mm. artillery. A battery of 25-pounders was brought up to deal with the situation (2). Different methods were called for in the hill fighting: (3) gunners loading a 4·5 howitzer, which proved invaluable in the difficult mountainous country of the interior.

Near Catania our troops captured an Italian howitzer intact, and very shortly it had been turned round and was punishing its former owners during a night artillery operation (4).

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Gaily the 8th Army Marched Into Catania

MONTGOMERY'S MEN GET THERE! Patrols of the 8th Army enter Catania (top) on August 5, 1943, and find the Cathedral intact,—evidence of the accuracy of our air bombing and naval bombardment. Lieut. B. J. Gardner, of the Durhams (inset), received the Mayor's surrender, while our troops were welcomed by the liberated townsfolk (bottom).

Photos, British Official; Planet News

The 78th Division Plucked Sicily's 'Cherry Ripe'

CENTURIPE, 'FAIRY TALE TOWN' of Sicily, on the higher slopes of Monte Calvoria, had lost some of its picture-postcard glamour when the vanguard of the British 78th Division entered it after three days' hard fighting. Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and London Irish, famed as mountain fighters in Tunisia, stormed their way across jagged gorges and high-banked rivers to the town—"Cherry Ripe" to them—and occupied it on August 3, 1943, on which day also Catania fell. Adrano was taken two days later. PAGE 199 *British Official photo, radioed from Algiers*

THE WAR AT SEA

by Francis E. McMurtrie

THE latest results of the war against the U-boats, announced in a joint statement by the Prime Minister and President Roosevelt on August 14, are the equivalent of a great sea victory.

Over a period of three months enemy submarines have not only failed to inflict any serious losses on our convoys, but have themselves been incurring casualties at the record rate of one U-boat sunk every day. During the first seven months of 1943 Allied shipping was increased by 3,000,000 tons, losses notwithstanding.

These figures eclipse anything accomplished in 1917-18. During those years the worst period for the U-boats was the month of May 1918, when 16 were destroyed. In no other month were so many accounted for, the next most successful being September 1917, when we destroyed 10, and the following November, when the total was nine. Thus there was no continuous run of heavy losses for the enemy to face, such as has been revealed recently. Nor was the shipbuilding output of this country and the United States in 1917-18 comparable with that of the present war.

ALREADY it is evident that the Germans are at a loss to meet the situation which confronts them. Their first reaction was to alter the tactics of the U-boat flotillas, which found that the wolf-pack system of preying upon convoys had ceased to pay them. Instead, as indicated by the reference in the official announcement to recent sinkings having taken place in distant areas, enemy submarines have had to seek targets in remote seas, where there is a chance of finding merchantmen unescorted. This policy is not going to yield any rich returns, such as might have been expected when a heavy attack was launched on an inadequately escorted convoy.

No secret has been made of the fact that the defeat of the U-boats is mainly due to a more abundant supply of escorts. From such accounts of convoy actions in the past three months as have appeared, it would seem that 10 to 12 warships, comprising destroyers, sloops, frigates and corvettes, is no unusual total for a convoy escort. In addition, the mid-Atlantic gap between the extreme operating ranges of shore-based aircraft on either side has been bridged by the employment of carriers of the escort type, whose planes are able to patrol the waters around the convoy routes and drive beneath the surface any submarines encountered. Not infrequently the patrolling aircraft are able to drop depth-charges which damage the U-boats and leave them an easier quarry for the warships that are immediately directed to the spot by signal.

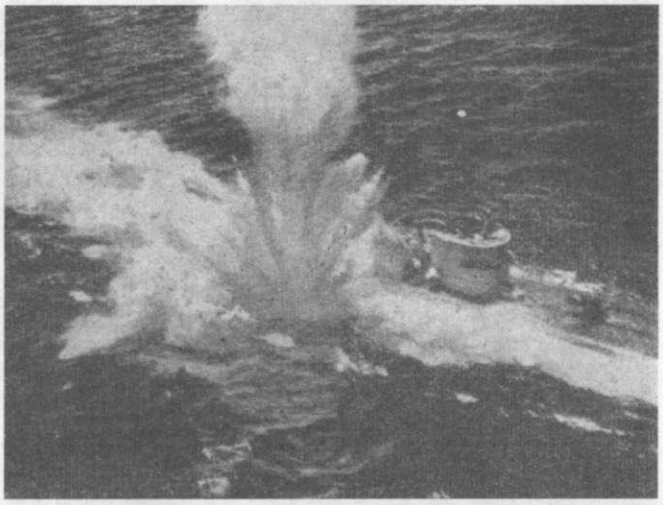
Though no figures of shipping losses have been released since the middle of 1941, an indication of the improvement during the present year is contained in the official statement that in the first six months of 1943 the number of ships sunk per U-boat was only half that in the second half of 1942, and only a quarter of that in the first half of 1942. (See chart in p. 202.)

An excellent opportunity appeared to be offered to the U-boats when the Allies invaded Sicily. Over 2,500 vessels were involved in the operation of invading the island and landing reinforcements and supplies, yet the total losses the enemy succeeded in inflicting were only about 80,000 tons, and that at heavy cost to the attacking submarines.

GERMANY Faces a Dearth of Experienced U-boat Crews

In spite of these discouraging results the Nazi propaganda agencies are working manfully to keep up the courage of the German people, who are regaled at frequent intervals with imaginary figures of the tonnage which is claimed to have been destroyed, even while it is admitted that the submarines' task is becoming harder.

However many U-boats remain in service, they cannot continue operating freely in the face of such severe losses as have been incurred in the past three months. Doubtless there are sufficient submarines in reserve or completing to make good the casualties, but the training of crews will need to be accelerated to man them all. An even greater difficulty will be to provide experienced captains, since it is usually the daring and enterprising ones whose submarines run into trouble. The slower and more cautious captains do not as a rule accomplish very much destruction, as analysis of the results of the last war's submarine campaign showed plainly enough.



LAST MOMENTS OF A U-BOAT, at the mercy of an escort carrier plane. Two bare-legged Nazi seamen duck as a huge spray of water rises alongside an Allied depth-charge, which is just about to spell doom for the enemy submarine—one of the 90 sunk by the Allies during the quarter May-July 1943. *Photo, Planet News*

In these circumstances the Germans are obviously batting on a losing wicket. They are endeavouring to retrieve the situation by increasing the force of air attacks on shipping, but the area within which their aircraft can operate effectively is less than it was earlier in the war. For the Luftwaffe to be required to provide fresh squadrons for war against seaborne commerce may well prove the last straw.

How is the morale of U-boat personnel likely to stand the severe losses inflicted upon it? Judging from the last war's experience, it is improbable that it will be affected to any serious extent, though more hurried training may result in some loss of efficiency. In 1918, it will be recalled, it was the crews of the German heavy surface ships, and not those of the destroyers and submarines, which became discontented and ultimately broke out into mutiny. There are far fewer big ships in the German Navy today, and their influence on the situation is correspondingly less.

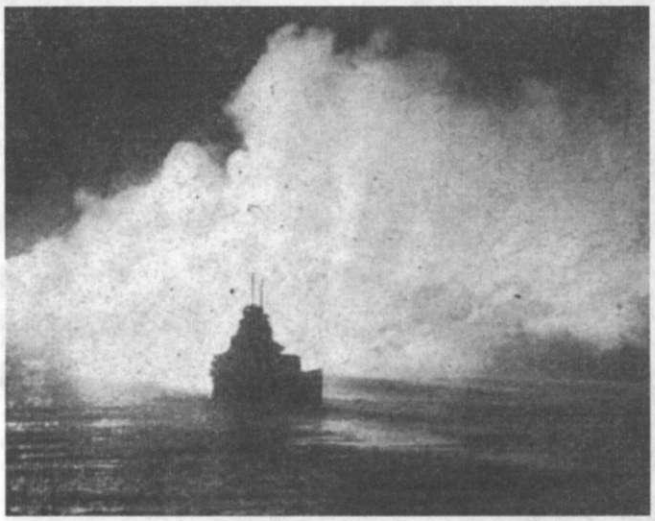
At the same time, the fact that those ships are mostly in Norwegian waters, and that their crews must be feeling acute anxiety for their homes and families in the Reich as the Allies' bombing programme continues to extend, is a factor whose importance must not be overlooked. The less friendly attitude which is now being adopted by Sweden must also have a depressing effect on their spirits.

IN connexion with the evacuation of German troops from Sicily across the Straits of Messina, I was recently asked: "What is the Navy doing to prevent this?"

Those who raise such questions would do well first to examine the geographical position. The Straits of Messina are narrow and tortuous, as a glance at a large-scale map will show. There are strong currents and whirlpools, to two of which the ancients gave the names of Scylla and Charybdis. To cross in power-driven boats at night is a simple matter, as the distance to be covered is not more than two or three miles.

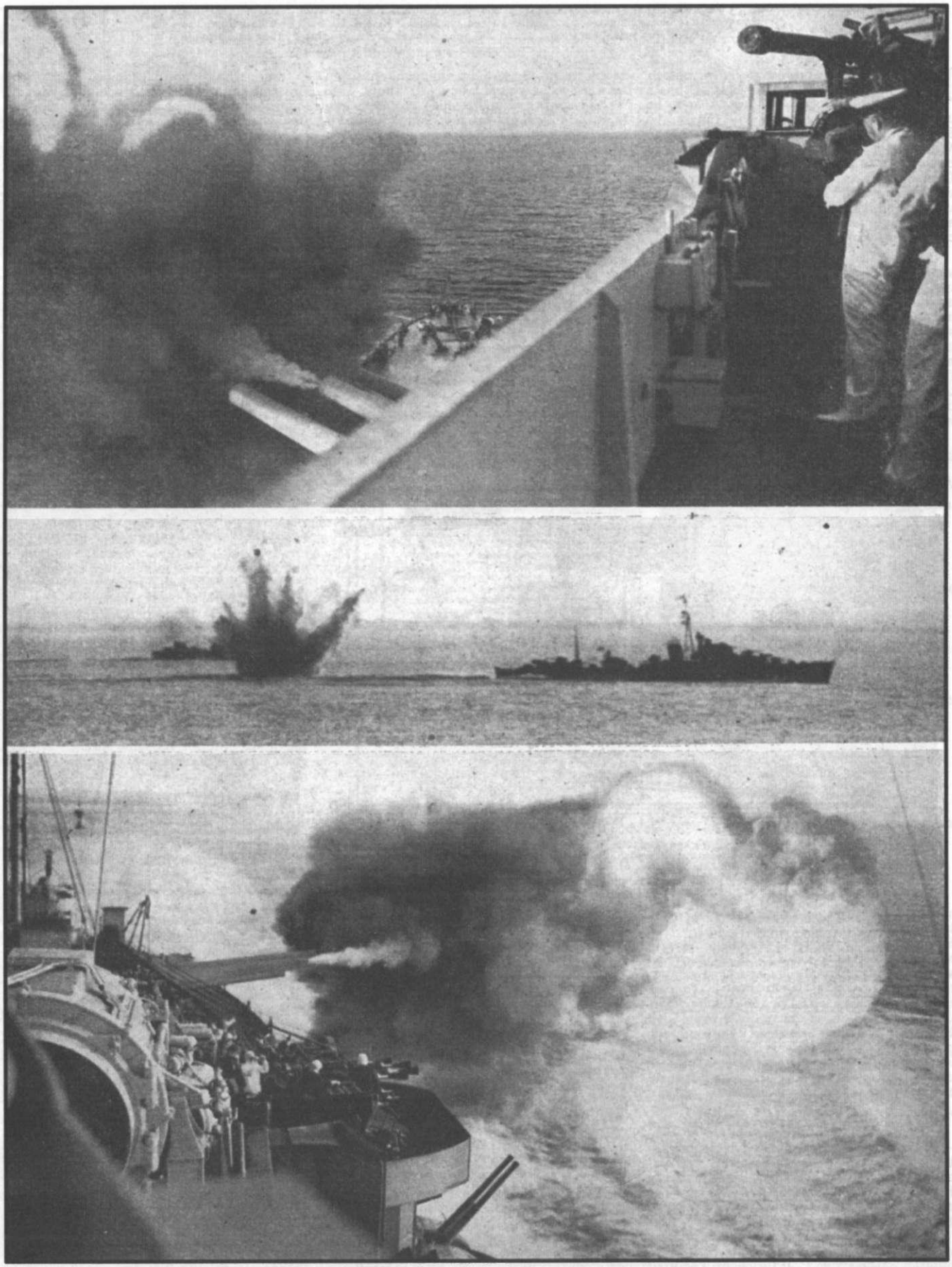
For heavy warships to venture into such narrow waters would be to risk destruction by mines, to say nothing of heavy guns in coastal batteries on either side of the Straits. Light draught vessels such as motor torpedo-boats and motor gunboats have more than once, under cover of darkness, delivered attacks upon enemy vessels sheltering there.

Even aircraft found it difficult to interfere effectually with the traffic across the Straits, as the Germans had assembled there a mass of anti-aircraft artillery whose incessant fire made it extremely hard to hit small craft in motion.



THE POUNDING OF MUNDA by U.S. warships contributed heavily to the capture of this important Japanese air base in the Central Solomons. After a fiercely fought campaign of little over a month Munda fell to Gen. MacArthur's troops on August 6, 1943. (Above) A light cruiser during a bombardment in which 19,000 shells were fired. **(See also story and illus., pp. 220-21.)** *Photo, Associated Press*

Catania Softened-Up by Allied Navies' Big Guns



NON-STOP NAVAL SHELLING of Catania—probably the most prolonged naval bombardment in history—preceded the 8th Army's assault on the city. When our men entered it (see p. 198) they found ample evidence of the accuracy of the shelling. A British battleship led the firing (top and bottom) with broadsides at from 15,000 to 11,000 yards range. During the engagement—in which the warship Queen Olga of the Royal Hellenic Navy participated—destroyers depth-charged a U-boat (centre) that attempted to interfere.

Photos, British Official

Will Allied Planes Spell the U-boats' Doom?

Step by step the U-boat menace is being met and mastered. And in that process a great and growing part is being played by aircraft. Indeed, as Capt. FRANK H. SHAW tells below, the men of the R.A.F.'s Coastal Command are of the opinion that, given the planes, they can provide the best answer to the enemy's much-vaunted submarine.

MY pilot claimed no fewer than seventeen aerial attacks on enemy U-boats during recent months; and he expressed the opinion that in the long-range Sunderland or Liberator or Catalina—or the Whitley, for that matter—the Allies had the best answer to Hitler's savage U-boat threats. Over the Bay of Biscay, in the Sunderland's wardroom, he intelligently expressed his views; and, though a child in years, he was a sagacious veteran in experience, which counts more than many years of theorizing.

It seems enemy submarines, when attacked, vary in behaviour according to their nationality. Italians usually surface, Germans as usually crash-dive, when spotted from the air and in danger of attack. Just why this should be so my pilot had no opinion to offer, unless it was that the "Itie" commanders were more humane to their crews than the Huns, and gave them an extra chance of survival. Better to jump overboard than die, poisoned and drowned and suffocated, in the clammy dark of the Biscay deeps.

Our long-range, weight-carrying aircraft have one main advantage over surface warships—speed. The increased range of vision is also worth taking into account. The Sunderland in which I travelled recently attacked and badly damaged a U-boat that was just coming into position to scatter torpedoes among a convoy; and the destroyers and corvettes shepherding the freighters didn't even know of the killer's proximity. He had probably detected the escort's precise whereabouts by his listening devices and had planned a quick hit-and-run assault on the unguarded part of the convoy. Instead there was this young pilot, with depth-charges.

"WE shook up that custard!" grinned the pilot. "It was a picnic; he tried to dive—hard; but the depth-charges lifted him so high out of the water that we saw his keel as he rolled. We gave him a pretty bracket; he wallowed like a harpooned whale. The escort ships hadn't even turned about by the time our attack was over."

The corvettes found just oil and a smear of debris; and the Sunderland's crew were allowed a "probable." If they hadn't spotted him, two, three or four—even more—of that very valuable convoy might well have been lost, ships and cargoes alike. A U-boat can crash-dive in 20 seconds, and can cruise on the surface at round about 20 knots. He has the entire ocean in which to hide; and the range of vision from a warship's bridge is limited. My pilot backed the aircraft against the surface ship every time.

"It will be better when the anti-submarine aircraft are trebled in number, of course," said Young Sagacity. "I know we're not exactly limiting our output. Assume that one aircraft attacks one submarine—to be relieved by another the moment it's got rid of its load of d.c.s (depth-charges)—the good old Merchant Navy would have a better chance. As it is, a man hesitates to unload everything on a single target in case another and even more urgent target shoots up just as he has disarmed himself. You can attack with machine-guns, cannon even, if fitted; but these U-boats are tough and can take a lot of punishment; and that sort of fire is wasted when they submerge."

To drop heavy depth-charges across the U-boat swirls more than doubles the hope of destroying him; the sea-disturbance following the big burst is bound to shake him up more than somewhat, set his batteries leaking, jolt the machinery; and when that happens he simply must surface to avoid asphyxiating his crew. That emergence gives the surface escort its chance.

Quite recently this pilot was cruising southwards not far from the course taken by enemy submarines from Lorient. The Bay of Biscay is a fruitful stalking-ground for Coastal Command.

Hanging immediately below cloud, in order to be able to climb to cover if attacked by the almost ubiquitous Ju 88s, he sighted some French trawlers down below. At that height they looked toylike, innocent. As the Sunderland passed over, the rear-gunner called through the inter-com: "There's one, Captain!" The U-boat had mingled with the trawlers as soon as it spotted our aircraft.

"Maybe he thought I wouldn't attack with a chance of sinking so-called friendly craft. It was a real Hun trick; like driving women before an advancing army to stop hostile fire. But the trawlers simply scuttered away like scared porpoises, so the Hun started to dive. We shot down on him like a thunderbolt and followed his swirl. Crossing him, we dropped a couple of d.c.s, and nothing happened beyond the bursts. But after a bit the look-outs—and every member of the crew turns into a look-out at such times—reported a small quantity of oil. That mightn't have meant anything; it's simple to squirt a gallon of oil out through a valve. But presently a little more oil seeped up—at about the same spot."

The pilot's face glowed. He was seeing it all again; that victory which means so much to our airminded youth.

THE aircraft then circled the swirls. Everyone was keyed up, with the gunners watching in case of air-attack. The pilot went in and dropped another brace of depth-charges; these exploded precisely. Up came the Hun, rolling hard. Before his conning-tower was rightly up, men opened the hatches and began to jump over the side. Others, better disciplined, manned their A.A. guns and opened fire; but a spraying from the Sunderland's armament either laid them out or caused them, too, to leap overboard.

With the flying-boat going at full speed, it wasn't too easy to distinguish details; but the U-boat appeared to be tilted the wrong way, down by the stern. The commander appeared in the conning-tower and must have tried to recall his crew; but they swam away all the faster, whereupon the German shot them up with a machine-gun. Another charge dropping close to the hull caused it to fold like a pocket-knife; the wreck went down hump-backed. All that remained was to go lower and signal the trawlers to pick up survivors.

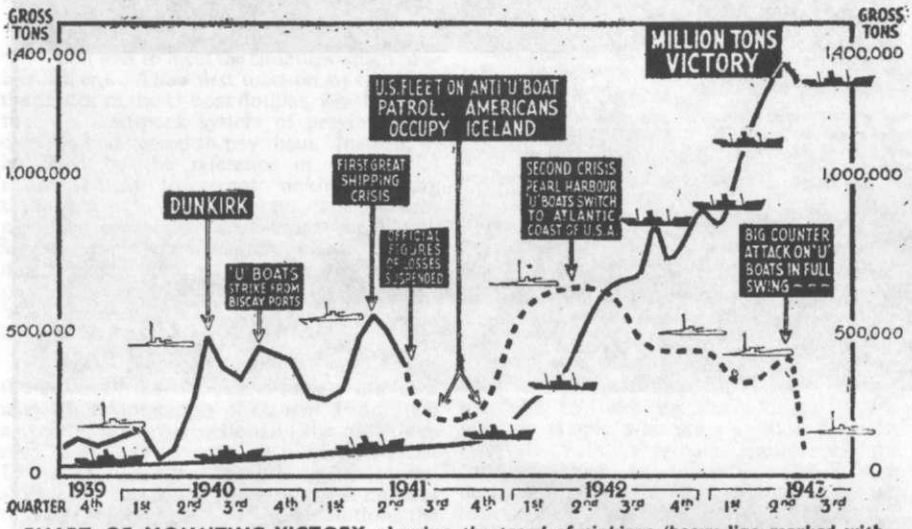
Coastal Command has no desire to steal the Navy's thunder; but the impression is growing strongly in the Command that big, long-range aircraft provide the best antidote to the marauding submarine. The radius of action is wide; with an adequate number operating, aircraft relieving aircraft without gaps, there need be no single moment, day or night, when a convoy is not covered by an efficient air-umbrella.

"We feel we cannot do enough to help the Merchant Navy," said my pilot. "The way they carry on, come hell or high water, they deserve the best protection they can get."

Two of this youth's best attacks occurred at night. Once the moon helped; the Northern Lights flared usefully the other time. A corvette collected survivors from No. 1, but no corvette was handy in the second case.

THESE long-range flying-boats are usefully employed against enemy surface ships. This one in which I travelled caught one blockade-runner fairly west of Finisterre, hurrying for a Biscay port. As no answer was given to the private signal, the Sunderland went down to investigate; whereupon the blockade-runner opened fire with everything he carried. Had the Hun kept quiet he might have had the benefit of the doubt, being disguised as a Spaniard; as it was, evasive action became immediately necessary. With the run-in, two depth-charges dropped almost against his paint. As the ship was not divided into innumerable water-tight compartments, he promptly disintegrated. The opinion was that his magazine had exploded. "Only H.E. could have created such a Brock's benefit!" said my pilot.

I foresee a time when the air will be full of flying "destroyers." When that time comes Hitler's dreams of final victory will fade into distorted nightmares.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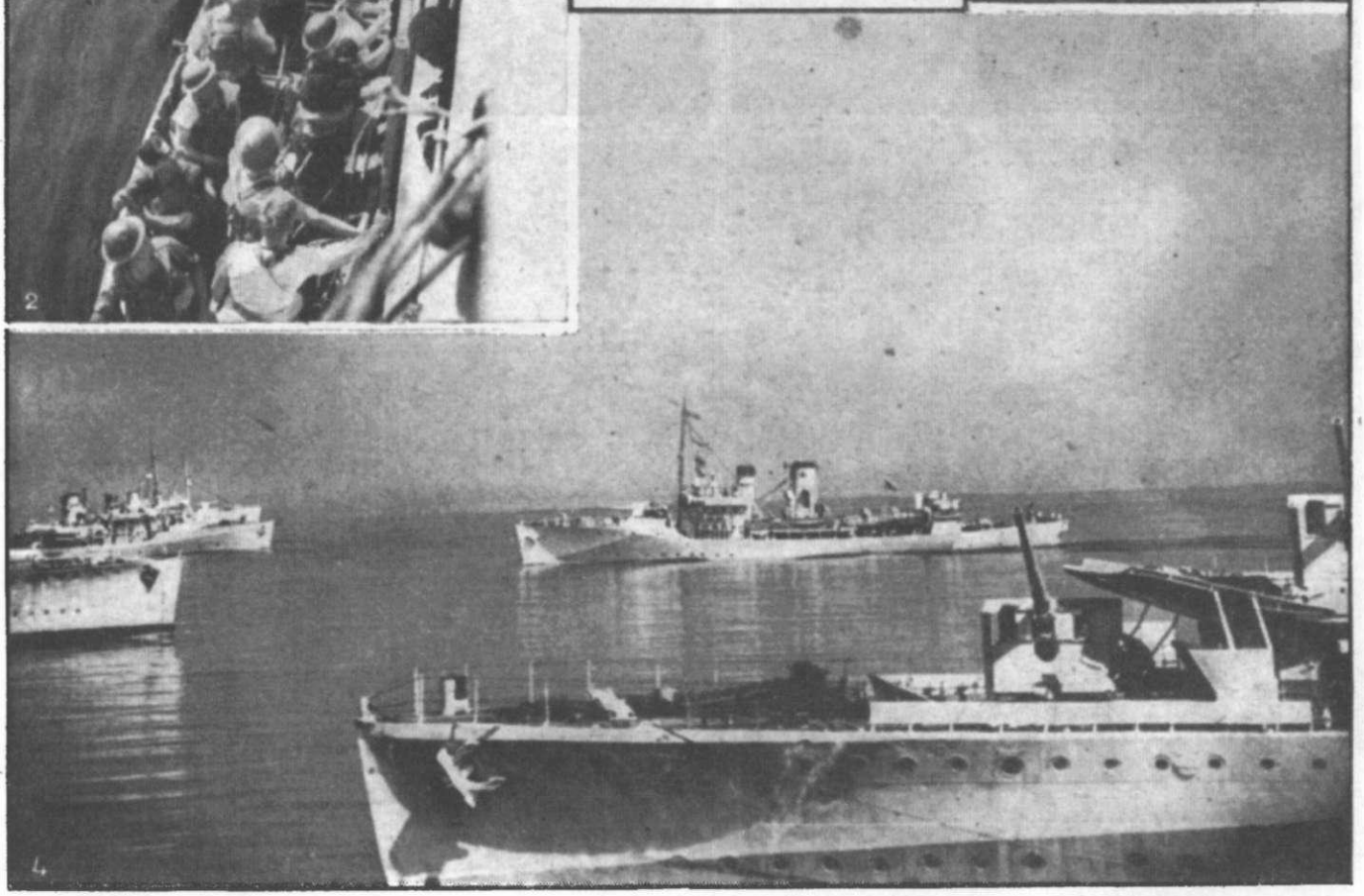
MILLION TONS VICTORY
U.S. FLEET ON ANTI U'BOAT PATROL. AMERICANS OCCUPY ICELAND
FIRST GREAT SHIPPING CRISIS
SECOND CRISIS PEARL HARBOUR U'BOATS SWITCH TO ATLANTIC COAST OF U.S.A.
DUNKIRK
'U' BOATS STRIKE FROM BISCAY PORTS
OFFICIAL FIGURES OF LOSSES SUSPENDED
BIG COUNTER ATTACK ON 'U' BOATS IN FULL SWING
1939
1940
1941
1942
1943
QUARTER 4th 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 1st 2nd 3rd

CHART OF MOUNTING VICTORY, showing the trend of sinkings (heavy line marked with U-boats, changing to dotted line when official figures were withheld) and new building (heavy line marked with merchant ships), from the outbreak of war. Allied output in June 1943 had reached 1,300,000 gross tons, and sinkings had fallen almost to the lowest recorded level.

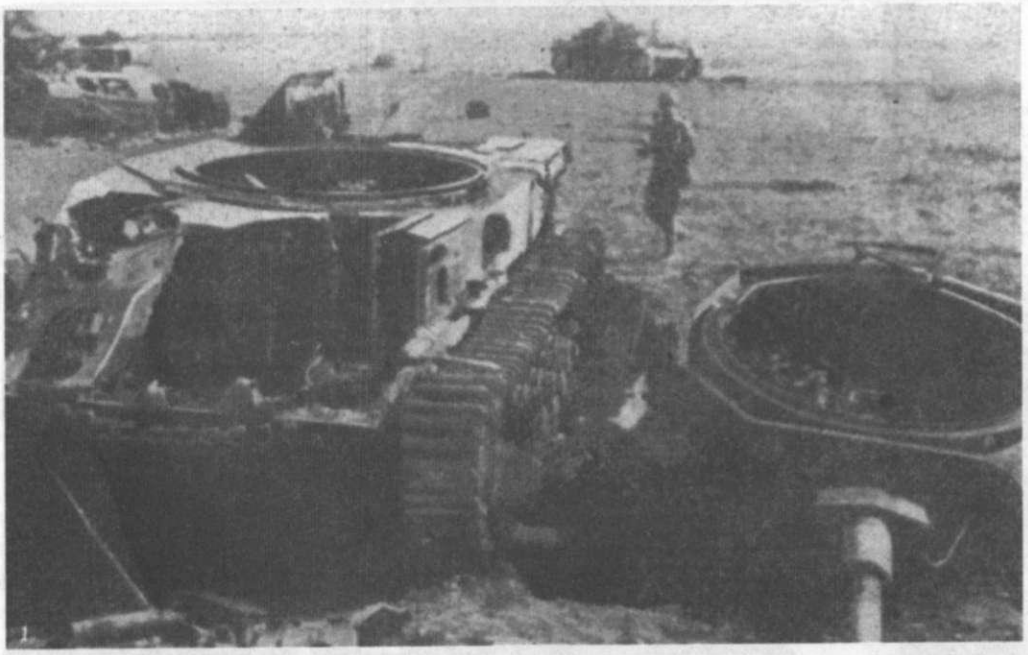
Courtesy of The Evening Standard

Behind the Scenes in Waging the Atlantic Battle

GREATEST BATTLE of the Atlantic in this war was fought during May 1943. The U-boats were routed and our losses were the lowest since 1939. Much of this success is due to Capt. A. J. Baker Cresswell, D.S.O. (3), Escort Training Captain, Western Approaches, and his staff aboard H.M.S. Philante, who are constantly trying out new methods of detection and destruction of U-boats and conducting training courses based on their researches. Among the exercises taught are the art of boarding an enemy vessel (2) and the manoeuvre known as the "Grid Iron" (4). Adm. Sir Max K. Horton (1), C.-in-C. W. Approaches, goes aboard the Philante.



Vanquished German Armour on the Road to Orel



METAL MONSTERS met in terrific conflict in the historic Battle of Orel. The capture of this city—hinge linking Hitler's central and southern armies—on August 5, 1943, followed 23 days of progress by the Russians through more than 40 miles of successive fortified belts reinforced with all the devices of military science by the Nazis during their 22 months' occupation.

Smashed German tanks (1 and 4) marked the line of the Soviet advance. Other enemy armour—of which this tank and self-propelled gun (2) are examples—was taken in perfect condition and sent to the Russian rear, later to play a further part in the concluding stages of the battle.

While on the way to the front line the Russians were careful not to encroach upon growing corn (3) or other crops, so vital for their continued drive, which by August 16 had taken them to Malye Luki, 16 miles east of their next objective—Bryansk—also menaced by Soviet forces thrusting from Zhizdra, 35 miles to the north-east.

Photos, U.S.S.R. Official; Pictorial Press

A Dagger at Russia's Heart Torn from Nazi Hands

CAPTURE OF OREL—followed in a few hours by the taking of Bielgorod—was the most heartening and significant development since war flared up on the Eastern Front. It exploded the myth of the inferiority of the Red Army to the Wehrmacht in summer fighting; it finally removed any German threat to Moscow; and it "hacked out the strongest molar in the jaw of the Nazis' southern defence line."

The fall of Bolkhov (1) on July 22 marked the last phase of the campaign, for it was then the strongest remaining outpost of Orel facing the Russian lines. A regimental gun follows Soviet infantry through fields that only a day before were held by the Nazis (2), while a battery of medium mortars gives powerful support (3).

Inside the Orel citadel at last, a spokesman of the Commanding Generals of the Red Army talks to inhabitants of the charred and shattered town (4), which was second only to Smolensk in importance in the Nazi defence system.

Photos, U.S.S.R. Official; Pictorial Press

1

2

3

4

From 'Fortress Europe' to 'Citadel Germany'

With Germany reeling under terrific blows and reverses, Hitler is preparing his last stand—or it is being prepared for him. DR. EDGAR STERN-RUBARTH explains here the reactions of the bewildered German people, and outlines the possible plans of the military Junkers who now see plainly enough what stands at the end of Hitler's road.

FOR exactly 130 years the Germans have never seen war within their own frontiers —until the R.A.F. carried it there. Gifted with imagination as they undoubtedly are, this lack of experience, fostering some sort of superstition as to the safety of their own homes, has contributed not a little to their acceptance of risk and odium of Hitler's predatory campaigns. The realization of what it now means to them, to their families and homesteads, is more bewildering, exasperating, and demoralizing by far than the same experience for Frenchmen, Russians, Italians, Balkan peoples and any other of the nations whose soil, within living memory, was swept by war.

Gestapo and concentration camps, for a while, were able to deal with the consequences of that sudden realization, as long as the Nazi leaders could explain away his predicament to the German man-in-the-street as a transitory hardship to be borne for the sake of ultimate victory. After all, there was something "heroic," some patriotic duty in suffering the loss of house and home, limbs and life if it contributed to the alluringly painted glorious future of the fatherland and the creation of a German-dominated world cleansed of Bolsheviks, Jews, Plutocrats, and whatever other bogies Goebbels's inventive brain had created for the Nazi dupes.

BUT this stage of the war is past; the enormous credit given to Hitler and his gang by a people that wanted to be convinced of their being right, and the rest of the world wrong, is exhausted. Under the blows of the R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F., of the utter failure of the third, but relatively limited summer offensive in Russia, the loss of all Africa, the successful invasion of Sicily, the dwindling U-boat campaign, that huge, obedient but greedy Gulliver, the German people, is beginning to turn and twist in the fetters applied by the Nazi dwarfs; Mussolini's sudden downfall, and the defection from the Axis cause of all Hitler's puppets afraid of retaliation from their own and the oppressed peoples, are completing the drastic cure.

Significant posters have turned up in Berlin and elsewhere in Germany: "Hitler hat Achsenbruch gehabt—entzieht ihm den Fuehrerschein!" In German "Axis" and "axle" are identical, while "Fuehrer" (leader) means "driver" in the official designation of a driver's licence; thus this slogan, rapidly spreading all over Germany, implies that Hitler has incurred a break of his axle (Axis), so withdraw his driver's (Fuehrer's) licence! A few months ago the repetition of such blasphemy, or any other public criticism of the Nazi leaders and their policy, would have meant the execution of scores of careless talkers, and the concentration camp for many more.

This, too, is at an end; the Gestapo and the S.S., wherever demonstrations have arisen, of late have been ordered to stay put, to let popular wrath exhaust itself, whether in the case of the looting by desperate masses in devastated Wuppertal, or of joint Italian-German demonstrations in armament plants when Mussolini's elimination was celebrated with bonfires into which both the dictators' pictures went indiscriminately. Hitler, Goering, and of late even glib-tongued Goebbels keep astonishingly quiet and invisible—and not merely from prudent considerations, or in order to devise some new devilry, but in consequence of pressure exercised by powers stronger now than their own.

IN fact, the generals have won their fight which, with interruptions, was going on between them and what they contemptuously call "Hitler's circus" ever since the first of their own bosses, Field-Marshal von Brauchitsch, C.-in-C. of the Forces, to begin with, was dismissed early in Hitler's disastrous winter campaign of 1941. They fight now, clearly, for their own narrow caste and professional interests —not for Hitler's ambitions, which they shared only as long as victory seemed possible.

They know, these military Junkers, that no victory, total or partial, but utter ruin and destruction stands at the end of Hitler's road; and they see a slender chance for themselves—the preservation of a smallish German army, with themselves as the leaders of the nation, if only they can make the war last another year or two so as to weary the Allied nations and exploit what dissensions might ensue. Their plan has been for some time a wholesale German withdrawal from the widespread and indefensible lines of Hitler's fantastic "Fortress Europe" into the "Citadel of Germany."

Long before our invasion of Sicily their main strategists had written off their Italian ally as "more of a liability than an asset"; and after a fierce 48 hours' row (July 24 and 25), they had enforced upon Hitler the ultimate and ridiculous offer of sacrificing eight divisions only for supporting the defence Italy to the last.

They now envisage, with the cool mathematics of professionals, yet with disastrous disregard for the political consequences, the taking back of their lines in Russia so as to shorten them by at least one third, the giving up of the Balkans, indefensible without the 29 to 34 Italian divisions and the wholly unreliable 23 Bulgarian —they want to keep, at least for the time being and in view of their value for Doenitz's fading U-boat campaign, the shores of France and Norway, but to provide also for their evacuation in an emergency.

For their lines of defence are clearly mapped out already; they embrace Germany proper, with a glacis surrounding her rugged and ill-defensible frontiers, from the tip of Jutland to the Straits of Dover, along the Maginot Line, the Swiss and Austro-Italo-Yugoslav mountain-border to the eastern tip of Slovakia in the Carpathian mountains; from there straight north across Poland to the eastern border of East Prussia—thus including some 60 to 70 million foreign people, instead of the 250 million they at present hold down.

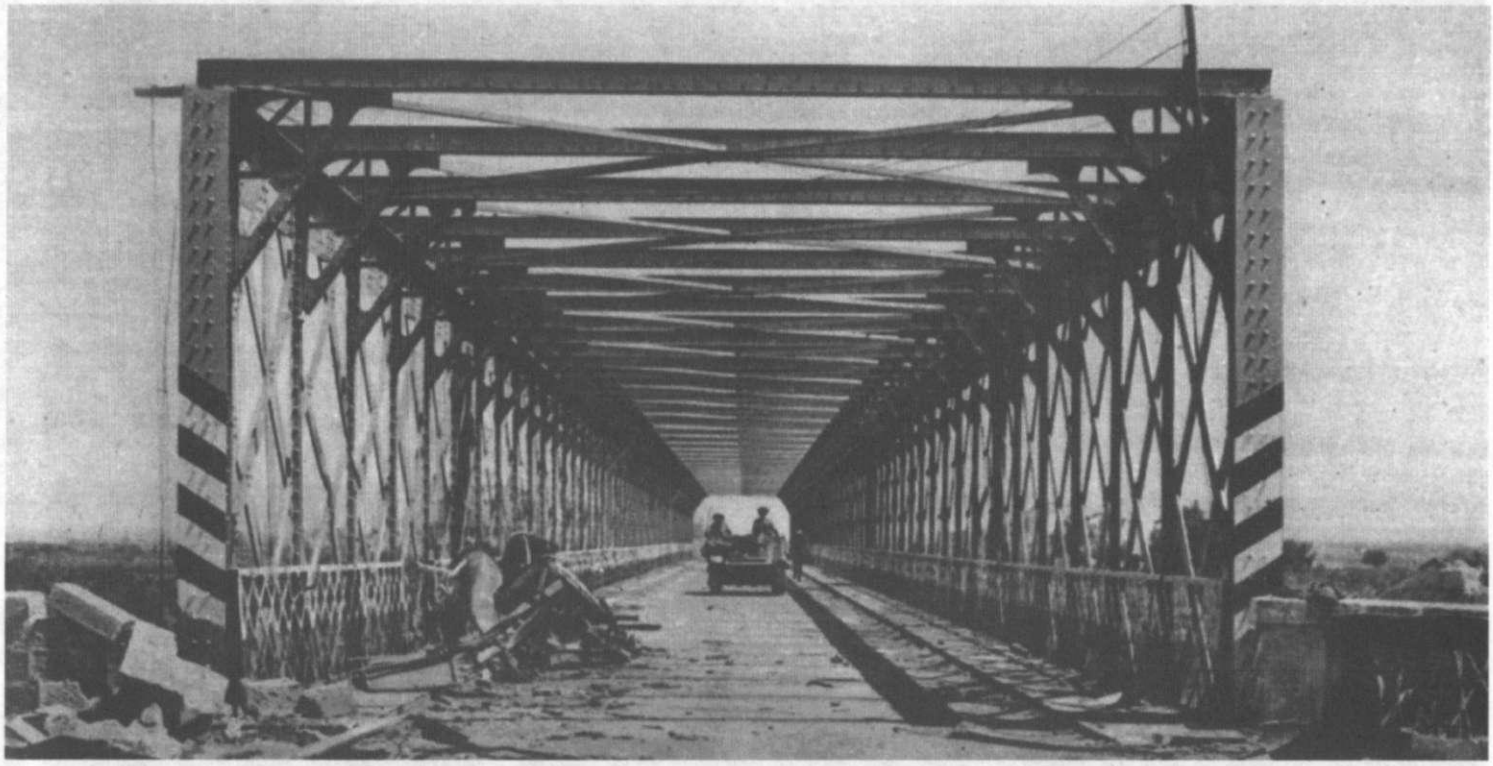
THERE is a rather fantastic element of political speculation in that scheme, too: the hope of coming to terms with Russia by evacuating her devastated and looted soil! While this concentration to within a stringently reduced territory would facilitate some of their, at present, most difficult tasks: transportation, exchange and reinforcement of fighting units, food-distribution, etc., and make heavily depleted fighting forces do for a longer period, the plan seems bound to miscarry because (a) it affords the same advantage of shortened lines to the United Nations, plus the active support of liberated nations thirsting for revenge, and (b) it would expose at one fell swoop the whole of that "Citadel" to our bombs, from Vienna to Koenigsberg, from Krupp's to Skoda's, from Upper Silesia to the Ruhr, and turn Germany proper into an ant-hill of desperate men, women, and children trying to escape destruction.

Yet, better strategists than Hitler as Brauchitsch, Bock, Rundstedt, Manstein—all of them, characteristically, belonging to the old Prussian nobility—undoubtedly are, they are clumsy politicians. What they are now preparing for the ultimate emergency is therefore hardly better than a parallel to the Italian transitional Savoy-Badoglio regime: a non-Nazi, then to be stamped "anti-Nazi," government of the one-time Papen-Schleicher brand, with a blend of less compromised high officials screening their own military regime.

THEY have systematically weakened Hitler's Pretorians, the real S.S., now largely replaced by unreliable bullies recruited all over occupied countries, by pushing their units into the most sanguinary spots of the Russian front; the military governors all over Europe have interfered with all political measures decreed by the Nazi authorities.

They would not hesitate to enforce the fate of Mussolini upon Hitler and his henchmen, when they decided that they have served their purpose in taking the blame for present disasters. There may be a last, bitter fight between desperate gangsters and cold-blooded military chess-players, before that.

WHAT GERMANY HOPES TO HOLD in Europe is suggested in this map, specially drawn for **THE WAR ILLUSTRATED.** Territory within the solid black line embraces Germany proper, with a glacis (shaded) surrounding her vulnerable frontiers. Note that Metz, Prague and Warsaw are included in the "German Citadel," as forecast by Dr. Stern-Rubarth in this page.



Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

British Paratroops Seized This Bridge

Here was fought one of the grimmest battles of Sicily. The 400-ft. long Primo Sole bridge (top) spanning the confluence of the rivers Simeto and Gornalunga, and key to our successful advance on Catania, was seized on the night of July 13–14, 1943, by British paratroops, changed hands again and again, and was finally held by the Durham Light Infantry. German prisoners (below) taken during the prolonged and bitter fighting there included many paratroops.

Pressing on From the Bridgehead

The Primo Sole bridgehead (see p. 207) made secure, our men pressed onward along the arrow-straight, six-mile road towards their objective—Catania. A British 4·5-in. gun (1) pounds enemy positions in the city's southern outskirts. Scottish troops (3) move up towards the grim fighting which awaits them; in the opposite direction go carts laden with Sicilian families and their goods, returning now that the fighting from which they fled has passed beyond the area of their homes.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Rifles and Shore Batteries Triumphant

The shadow of defeat already loomed darkly over Catania when British infantry (2) moved up to Vizzini, scene on July 15 of yet another 8th Army triumph. Three weeks later Catania itself was occupied. Meanwhile, Sicilian coastal defence batteries had been overcome and the guns, captured in good order, manned by the British (4): these men, under Major J. V. Kelly, D.S.O., are overlooking Syracuse (which fell on July 10); Allied invasion ships are seen in the background.

R.A.F. Contributes Its Magnificent Quota

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

With amazing speed captured Sicilian airfields were reconditioned for use by the R.A.F. A Spitfire (top left) is overhauled by the side of an abandoned German ME 109. R.A.F. Servicing Commandos (top right) repair radio equipment within a stone's throw of a Spitfire revving-up for onslaught on enemy transport; while pilots of "The Fighting Cocks"—a famous North African fighter squadron—perch on yet another unlucky ME 109 (below) while waiting orders for a fresh sortie.

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

WHO first thought of a Home Guard for Britain? There are many claimants to this honour, one of them, oddly enough, the Trades Union Congress.

From the Trade Unions, and from the Labour Movement as a whole, there came for as many years as that Movement has existed, the most determined opposition to a Citizen Army. I can remember having many heated arguments with Labour men when I was doing my best to support Lord Roberts' appeal for national military training.

"No conscription" was the Party's slogan; it was opposed equally to the raising of a vast volunteer force. Yet, according to Mr. Charles Graves, who has written a very full and most interesting history of The Home Guard of Britain (Hutchinson, 10s. 6d.), it was the T.U.C. which, after the War Office had turned down a scheme put up to it by two highly-placed army officers, took the matter up "and very shortly afterwards the scheme went through."

It is a pity this sudden conversion was so long delayed. At an earlier date the arming of two million men for defence, leaving the regular army free to undertake operations overseas, would probably have convinced Germany, whether in the Kaiser's time or after Hitler took his place, that we really meant business and sabre-rattling must stop.

I think there is little doubt that the response to the Prime Minister's call (made through Mr. Eden) for Local Defence Volunteers in May 1940 had a great deal to do with making Hitler postpone the attempt to invade this island. It was a sign, for one thing, that our national unity was complete; that there was no Fifth Column here to help him; that, even if Mosley, the potential British Quisling, had not been clapped into jail, any attempt to do here what had been done by traitors in Holland and Norway, and probably in France, would have been instantly and bloodily crushed.

IT was on receiving help from sympathizers in our midst that Hitler counted when he planned his invasion. Ribbentrop had misled him, just as Prince Lichnovski misled the Kaiser's Government before 1914. When hundreds of thousands of men from all classes hurried to join the L.D.V. the Nazis quailed at the thought of the reception an invading force dropped from the air would get. Their plan was hurriedly changed.

If they had known more about this new element in the war situation they might have stuck to their original idea. When I joined it a week or two after recruiting began, it was in a condition which could almost be called in the language of the Book of Genesis "without form and void." We had no officers, we had no arms, we had no notion what our duties were to be.

After some weeks we got a few rifles which we shared, much to the disgust of the "old sweats" among us, who looked on a rifle as a soldier's most treasured personal possession. Gradually the force took shape. By the time its name was altered to Home Guard, in the late summer of 1940, it was settling down to its job.

The War Office was taken by surprise when the decision to enrol a citizen defence army was made. Suggestions had been put up to it that such a supplement to the regulars might be necessary in view of the probable use of parachute troops by the enemy. These were waved aside. The official attitude was "We are doing all that is required." Even when Mr. Churchill forced its hand, it took a long time to carry out his wishes. Mr. Eden as War Minister was sent to tell Parliament there would be no commissioned ranks nor even real N.C.O.s.

Why Hitler Changed His Plan

AS late as November 1940 the headquarters of the force were "a scene of mild pandemonium." There was not then the same urgency as there had been in May, when the organizers were told the L.D.V. "must be ready to fight in two weeks." But it was incredible that after six months there should still be so much uncertainty and muddle.

Finance was one great difficulty. The Treasury were very sticky about it. However, the obstacles to the efficient and smooth working of the force were smoothed away until it became what we know it to be today—the most remarkable example in history of what the French call a *levée en masse*, the uprising of the manhood of a nation in face of danger, the manifestation of a will to victory that has never been surpassed.

It was the complete mix-up of all sorts and conditions of men in the recruiting of the L.D.V. that puzzled and worried Hitler when he was shown translations from British newspapers of reports about the rush to join. The War Office had said that, if the country was appealed to, "it did not think the men would come forward for volunteer local defence." That shows how utterly bureaucrats are out of touch with the public. Recruits began coming forward even before Mr. Eden had finished speaking on the wireless that memorable evening of May 14, 1940.

The police stations experienced a busy night. Young men, old men, the fit and the invalids gave in their names. Statements as regards age were taken on trust, except in those cases in which those who were obviously in the seventies and eighties wanted to pass as under sixty-five, and those recently out of the nursery who pretended they had reached the age of seventeen.

In the ranks were many who had fought well and even become famous as soldiers. One commanding officer, a V.C., looked at a recruit and said, "Haven't I seen you before somewhere?" "Yes, sir, at Buckingham Palace, an investiture," was the reply. "What decoration did you get?" the officer inquired. "The same as yours, sir," the recruit answered. He was a V.C., too; his name, J. Leach.

When a brigadier was inspecting Home Guards, he stopped before a man with a long row of medal ribbons on his tunic and said patronizingly, "You seem to have seen a lot of fighting, my man. Tell me, which campaign did you enjoy most?" The private thought a moment, then replied, "I think, sir, it was the one in which I was second-in-command to General Allenby."

Though Mr. Graves has written a serious history with full details (though not quite full enough dates), he is not above telling a story whenever the chance comes in his way. Here is a good one about a sentry in Scotland. His company commander came round and asked if he had ever fired his rifle. The answer was No. Was it loaded? Yes, five rounds in the magazine. Had he got a cartridge in the breech, ready to be fired? No. He opened up and showed the breech empty. "All right," said the officer. Then the private "closed the bolt smartly, thereby sending a round into the breech, pressed the trigger, and—missed his commander by a couple of inches!" There was the silence of consternation for a moment. Then the sentry remarked, "Aweel, I've fired ma rifle noo, sir."

CHANGING from a volunteer to a conscripted force has not altered the spirit of the Home Guard. They are keener now than at any time, Mr. Graves claims.

No country in the world could have provided so many men able to maintain so much enthusiasm over so long a period of so much relative inaction. But for the Home Guard England would almost certainly have been invaded. But for the Home Guard it would have been impossible to envisage the invasion of the Continent. Two million men fully armed and trained, knowing every inch of their district, well led and in good heart, form a sure guarantee of victory. It is a force which has given courage to all the United Nations. It has survived its haphazard origin, its temporary lack of arms, its critics, and its greatest potential enemy—boredom. It has been and continues to be the most inexpensive force ever raised.

The average age of the Home Guardsmen is now slightly under thirty. The old and unfit have been weeded out "stringently," says Mr. Graves. Those who remain are alert, proficient, keen. He has a word for their wives, too. "They could not do it if their womenfolk did not encourage them."

A word that is thoroughly well deserved.

ANTI-TANK UNIT of the Southern Railway Home Guard at gunnery practice. Trained for garrison defence duty in Kent, they are a gallant few of the 2,000,000 members of Britain's Citizen Army whose proud and chequered story is told in the book reviewed in this page.

Photo, Planet News

Healing Hands of the Red Cross in Sicily

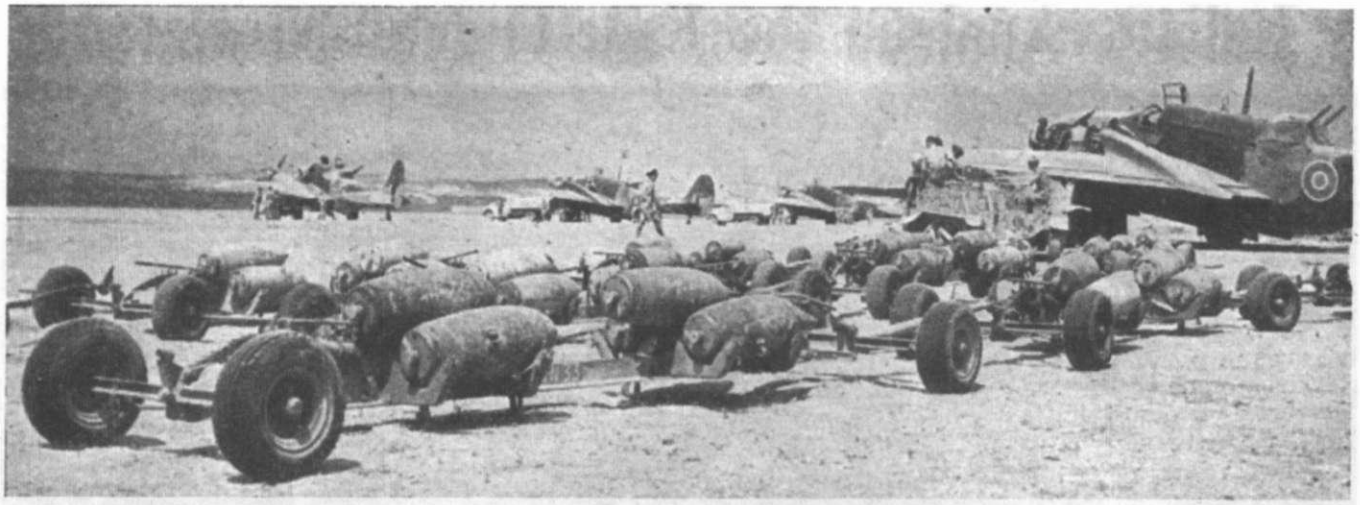
SUCCOURING THE WOUNDED are Major G. A. Fowler and Capt. J. S. Hutchinson, of the R.A.M.C., assisted by an Italian Red Cross nurse, Yolanda Girasole (1). Bandsman A. Frampton, of the Isle of Wight, employs a Sicilian mule-cart (2) to take medical supplies to a forward dressing-station. Nursing Sisters of the Queen Alexandra Imperial Nursing Service were serving in Sicily three or four days after the invasion started. (3), British nurses resting barely an hour's ride from the front.

Photos, British Official

Italians Applaud the Fade-Out of Mussolini

JUBILATION IN ROME followed the resignation of Mussolini, self-appointed Dictator of Italy and Fascist Number One, on July 25, 1943. From an improvised platform, a portrait of King Victor Emmanuel is displayed, flanked by the Italian flag (top), while a bus conveys a cheering mob flourishing the national standard through a street of rejoicing citizens (bottom). Marshal Badoglio replaced the Duce as Governor of the country, with full powers. See also story in page 188.

Photos, Associated Press



ON A MALTA AIRFIELD a chain of bomb trolleys delivers its load to R.A.F. Baltimores. These light bombers have recently been operating from Malta against enemy positions in Sicily and the toe of Italy for the first time since Italy entered the war. To them must go part of the credit for the destruction of some 2,000 Axis aircraft during the Sicilian campaign, and they were well represented in the 12,500 sorties made by Allied aircraft over Sicily in July, 1943.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

PERHAPS the most important aspect of the rising air offensive of the United Nations against the European end of the Axis is the increasing scale of daylight bombing. For this we have to thank principally the foresight of American Air officers and American aeronautical and armament engineers.

Indeed, the team work of the British and Americans in the air is one of the most remarkable current features of the war. Where the Americans were least advanced (as in heavy night bombers) the British were ahead of the world. And where the British were backward (as in heavy day bombers) the Americans were ahead of the world. This happy combination of circumstances has made it possible to stage the most complete air offensive the world has yet seen. It is a condition of things which the Axis failed to foresee, a failure they must bitterly regret.

When Goering boasted that the Reich—and especially the Ruhr—would be safe from bombs he must have placed his faith in gunfire to keep back the night bombers and in the (then) superior numbers of German fighter squadrons to defend the daylight sky. But nothing the German air generals ever did in the way of night bombing approached in the slightest degree the overwhelming of the defences that is achieved in every big raid by Sir Arthur Harris's Bomber Command. The guns and searchlights, massed though they are, are battered into semi-silence and blinded by the sheer weight of the air bombardment and by the smoke that rises from the smashed and burning target.

ALWAYS the Germans learn much in theory, but seldom enough in practice. Their own theory of war before they plunged the world into this second and greater global conflict was that mobile attack would defeat static defence. How then did it come about that Goering and the German air generals failed to perceive that air attack is mobile while air defence is largely static and especially so at night? My own view is that they never got as far as that in thought. They knew that they possessed great superiority in numbers of aircraft and they assumed that victory would be theirs because the enemy would never get an opportunity to recover. In June 1941 Hitler departed from the German theory by turning his forces against Russia and thereby giving us the opportunity to recover. Finding himself up against a tougher proposition than he evidently expected, he had need to embroil Japan to keep us and the Americans too busy to bother him while he remained preoccupied with his Asiatic adventure.

We never believed seriously in the daylight bombing offensive. It was thought that no day bomber forces could survive the losses that would be inflicted by modern fighter aircraft. And so we concentrated on night bombers and day fighters. This theory was vindicated in the Battle of Britain, and Hitler's forces (and theories) met their first defeat.

AMERICAN Long-Range Planes Surprise Axis Air Strategy

In the Western Hemisphere, however, the conditions were so different from those obtaining in crowded Europe with its relatively small countries and cheek-by-jowl frontiers, and thinking of the wide spaces of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans—the jump from San Francisco to Honolulu is 2,400 miles with no intervening island—and the 2,650 miles overland crossing from the east to west seaboards, and the 3,000-mile trip from San Diego to the Panama Canal Zone, not to mention the mountain and desert nature of some of the territory, American points of view coincided neither with the British nor the German. The Americans built long-range flying boats and long-range daylight bombers to meet their own hemisphere's requirements. The extensive nature of the operations which they had to provide for made it imperative that they should provide their bombers with the elementary defences of height and speed and powerful armament, rather than design them to take advantage of the strategic cover of night.

Bombers that operate by night are handicapped by the variations in the hours of darkness in the higher latitudes throughout the year. That is why it is easier for some of our bombers to operate from the southern side of the European front, rather than the western side represented by the British Isles, and why some of the bombers taking off from Britain in the summer months for distant targets, situated several degrees to the south, fly on to land in Africa, instead of attempting to return to Britain, where their return flight would discover them in daylight over German-occupied Europe.

Hitler's early successes in this war gave Germany possession of a continent and introduced conditions which were not dissimilar from those which naturally belonged to the Western Hemisphere. And American long-range, heavily armed, high-flying day bombers brought to these new conditions equipment which neither Britain nor Germany possessed, and a phase of the air war began which was unexpected by the Axis.

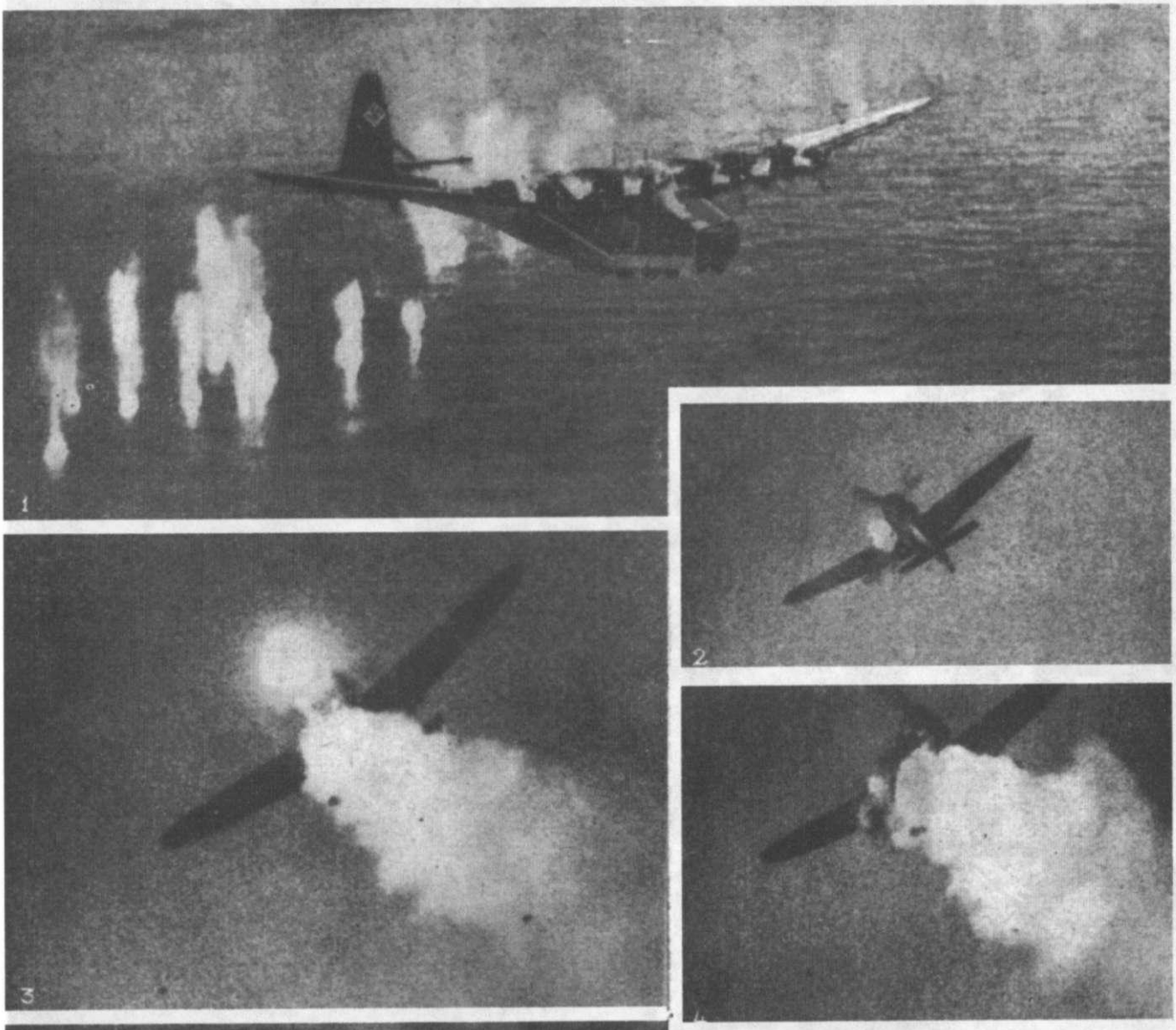
Daylight raids by Fortress and Liberator bombers began with short-range attacks against targets in Western Europe. The crews required operational experience. But the ability of these aircraft to fight their way was soon demonstrated, and gradually they were sent to tackle targets sited at greater ranges.

There came the raid against the Ploesti oilfields of Rumania, when 177 Liberators flew from the south of the Mediterranean up to Corfu and then turned in eastward across the Balkans. They shot down 51 enemy fighters. They flew through the balloon barrage that protected (or rather was supposed to protect) the oil region. Fortresses and Liberators bombed the marshalling yards in Rome, Naples came under their frequent assault. Hamburg felt their bombs. So did Gelsenkirchen. Liberators bombed Wiener-Neustadt's shadow factory for Messerschmitt fighter aircraft on August 14, Austria's first raid. Fortresses bombed the Messerschmitt plant at Regensburg, Germany, three days later. Mitchells and Marauders bombed the Rome airfields of Ciampino and Littorio. All these and many other raids were made by day. Heavy night bombers from Britain were raiding Milan and Turin; Mosquitoes night-bombed Berlin.

SO, with the dove-tailing of American day methods and British night methods of bombing, the power of the United Nations to create havoc within the Axis-controlled ring of Europe has risen to proportions beyond the capacity of the Luftwaffe to counter.

These powerful blows are strategically fitted into the general strategy of the war, so that they aid the land offensive in Europe and Russia and the offensive against the U-boat. They are the nearest approach to the application of the theory of General Douhet, the Italian air theorist, that any nation or group of nations has yet reached. It would be the height of irony for Britain and America in combination to prove to the Axis partners that the theory of an Italian general was correct, after Germany and Italy, having tried to carry out the theory, thought that it could not be applied in practice. But war is always paradoxical. Air war is no exception.

Last Moments of Service in the Luftwaffe!



DEATH STRUGGLES in the air, caught by the camera, provide some of the most dramatic photographs of the war. A German ME 323 transport plane (1) is hit by a stream of cannon shells from an American Marauder, near Cape Corse, Corsica; gunfire from the victim's windows suggests that it was a troop-carrier.

The end awaiting it is as inescapable as that of this Junkers 88 shot down by a Coastal Command Beaufighter in the Bay of Biscay (5); all that remains of the Junkers is a blaze of oil and petrol on the water.

A dog-fight between a Spitfire and an ME 109 over Northern France concludes with a burst at 200 yards, which causes fire in and around the cockpit of the ME 109 (2), resulting in an explosion in the engine (3) and pieces of the aircraft falling away. A moment later (4) the port wheel drops off and the smoke trail almost blinds the Spitfire's camera vision as the Nazi machine hurtles to destruction.

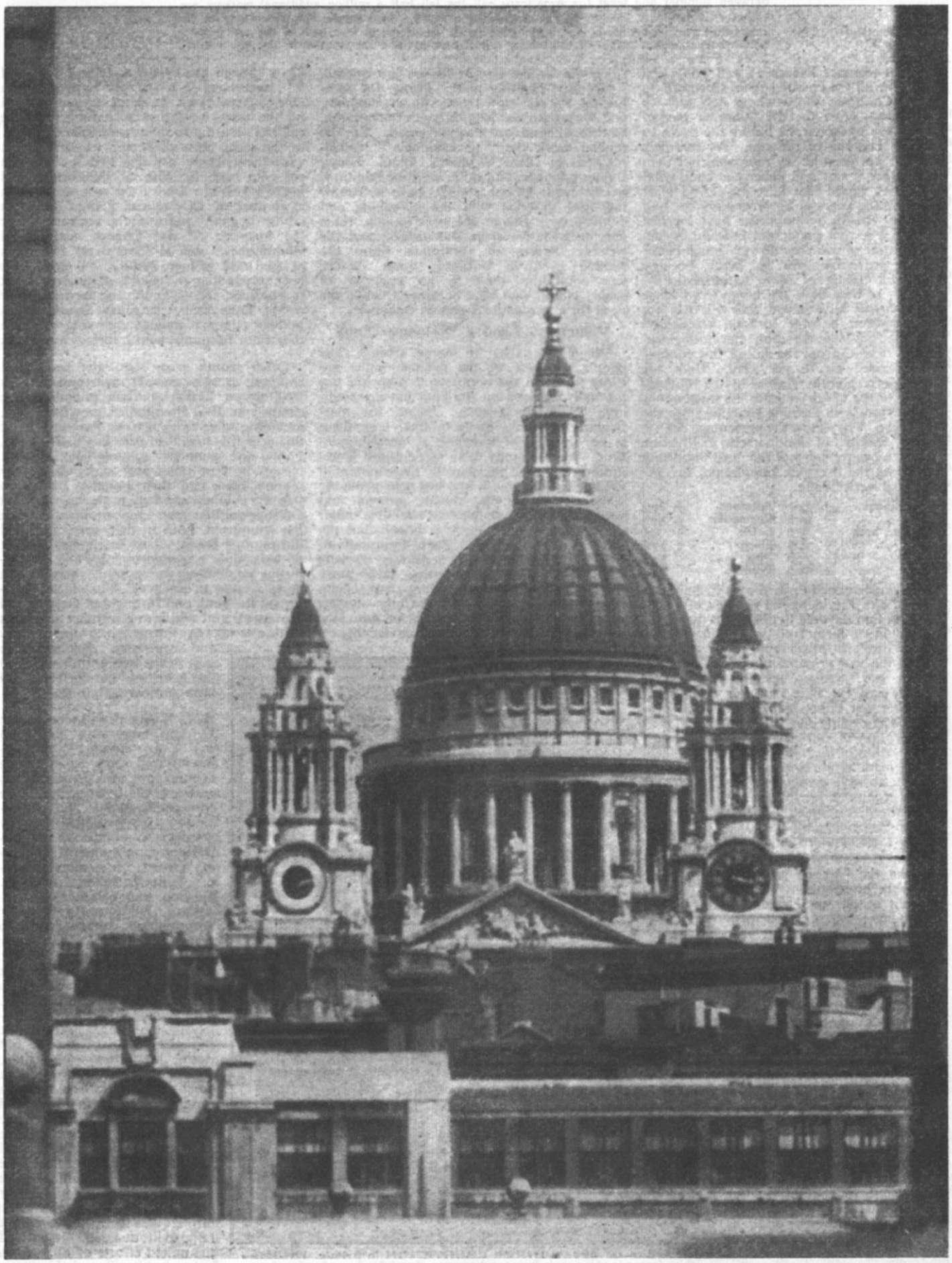
Photos, British Official

Funeral Pyre of Hitler's Rumanian Oil Hopes

PLOESTI OILFIELDS ABLAZE as 177 Liberators of the 19th U.S. Army Air Force pressed home their daylight attack on August 1, 1943 (see also p. 186.) Bombers sweep in low above swirling smoke and flame (2). Smoke clouds thicken as another releases its bomb-load on the refineries (3), which suffered very heavy damage (4). Sole Englishman among the 2,000 airmen who took part was Squadron Leader George C. Barwell, D.F.C. (1), R.A.F. gunnery expert, since awarded the American D.F.C. and Air Medal.

Photos, U.S. Official; Planet News

Demolition Gives Us a New View of St. Paul's



WHERE STEEP LITTLE DORSET RISE takes you from Tudor Street by historic Salisbury Square to Fleet Street, this unique view of St. Paul's has recently been opened up by the demolition of bombed property. The Cathedral may now be seen in a setting comparable to that which inspired Sir Christopher Wren—standing on an eminence and islanded in space—with room enough even for the open-air fête and sports meeting which was held on August Bank Holiday, 1943.

Photo, Topical Press. Copyright, Amalgamated Press, Ltd.

This Harvest Will Live in the Memory of Man

Between summer and what the Americans call the fall half a million additional workers are required to help the farmers in the British countryside. This article tells something of the magnificent achievements of our agriculture under the stress of war, and of the yet greater achievements within reach—if the labour is forthcoming and the weather is not too unkind.

HIGH summer has come and gone, and in all the counties from Cornwall to Caithness those whose job it is to make things grow for the filling of hungry mouths are toiling from before the dawn to after the bedding of the sun. As summers go it has not been above reproach, but then the weather is not and never has been what the farmer would like it to be. And after two thousand years or so of making the best of it, our British agriculturists have learned to make it a very good best indeed. Moreover, in time of war they do very much better than in peacetime—not so much because they work harder or more enthusiastically, but because they have the happy confidence that what they have sowed, that will they not only reap but be able to sell. Compared with the pre-War position the total production of food from the soil of this country has increased by 70 per cent. Here are some figures recently released by the Ministry of Agriculture which indicate the tremendous advances made in farming practice since the War began. They show the percentage change in the acreage of land under cultivation and given over to some of the most important crops, and the livestock population, in 1942 compared with 1939:

Arable tillage	+ 33·7	Potatoes	+ 80·4
Tillage	+ 52·8	Vegetables	+ 55·1
Cultivated area	— 2·0	Cattle ..	+ 4·6
Wheat	+ 35·6	Sheep ..	— 17·8
Oats	+ 72·0	Pigs ..	— 51·9
Cereals	+ 65·7	Poultry ..	— 24·2

The small reduction in the cultivated area—in spite of the increased acreage of arable land and that devoted to tillage—is due to the conversion of farm land to military and industrial uses; in other words, it reflects the vast growth of aerodromes, war factories, training-grounds and the like, that our mounting war effort has called forth. The decline in stock, with the exception of cattle—in itself an indication of the valuable encouragement given by the Government to milk production—is largely accounted for by the fall in imported feeding-stuffs, from the pre-War figure of 8,500,000 tons to 1,300,000 tons in 1942-3.

BEFORE the War we produced from home-grown beet 23 per cent of our total sugar requirements; we are now producing 35 per cent. Last year Britain's farmers were using 150,000 tractors, against only 55,000 before the War. Another comparison made by the Ministry's statisticians is in the number of allotments: 1,700,000 as compared with 930,000. In the same period the number of gardens cultivated for vegetables has increased from three millions to five millions.

Every year since the War began has seen a good harvest, but this year's is expected to outtop them all. (And very necessary is it that it should do so, in view of the immense strains on our shipping, to be inevitably intensified tremendously as soon as the Battle for Europe opens in real earnest.) But the greatest hindrance to still further increased production is the shortage of labour, and this in spite of the vast strides in mechanization suggested by the tractor figures just quoted. For potato-planting in the spring, for root-hoeing, for the corn harvest in the summer, and for potato and beet lifting in the autumn, additional hands are always wanted. For the regular work the "professionals," supplemented by the Women's Land Army, Italian prisoners and other wartime additions to the rural labour supply, have somehow managed to cope with the ploughing and cultivations. But at the peak points, these varying with the crop, the district, and the weather, scores of thousands more are wanted even in ordinary times. Under war conditions there is no reservoir of casual labour that may be tapped, while the need for extra hands is greater than ever.

Volunteers Lend a Welcome Hand

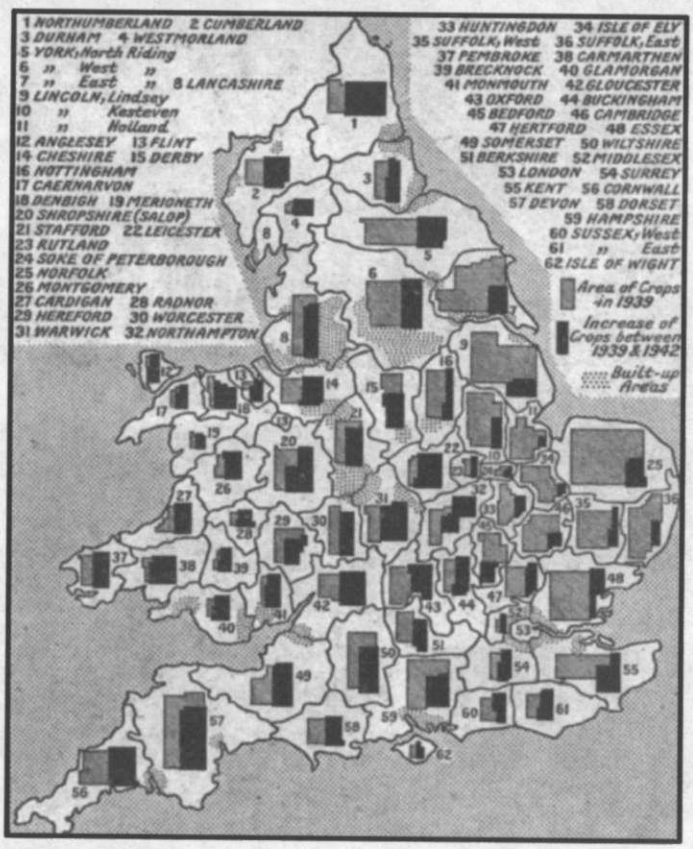
Where are they to come from? The people who are of the greatest value are those living in the countryside who are not normally workers on the land but are available in an emergency. These are particularly welcome, since in their case there is no question of transport or accommodation. Most County War Agricultural Committees prepared registers of these potential volunteers long ago; and last year probably some 30,000 people, mostly women and young folk, made themselves available under the scheme. This year it is hoped that the figure will be doubled. Then thousands of men and women, chiefly sedentary workers engaged in the smaller towns, have been rendering more or less regular part-time help in agriculture through Land Clubs—bodies of individuals prepared to work on odd jobs at week-ends or during the long evenings.

BUT though the countryside and the small towns can do a lot, they have not been able to provide all the extra labour required on the farms at the peak periods. So the call has gone out to the town-dwellers proper, to the great mass of people whose contacts with the country are few and far between yet who have the love of the country still in their hearts. During the summer months a number of Agricultural Camps has been set up in many parts of the country, under the auspices of the County Agricultural Committees; and to these many thousands of men and women, youths and girls, have been proceeding, to spend four days or a week in work on the neighbouring farms. These camps have been extensively advertised as holiday camps; and so they are, although they cater for guests who both pay and work.

Other camps have been run for school children, a two-year-old development. In 1941 about 12,000 children attended these camps; in 1942 the number grew to 30,000, including some three or four thousand girls; this year it is hoped to pass the 50,000 mark. Public and secondary schools have sent out parties in term-time, and many elementary schools have had their holidays altered so that the children can help in the fields. Civil Defence workers have been prominent among the volunteers, both in their spare time and during duty hours. Last year a vast amount of assistance was rendered by the Army—during September, for example, there was a daily average of nearly 45,000 soldiers working on the land, and throughout October and November and well into December some tens of thousands were engaged in lifting potatoes and sugar beet. But it may be that in the final months of 1943 the Army and the Air Force will have another task to do.

JULY 4, American Independence Day, was also celebrated as "Farm Sunday" throughout Britain. For most of the farmers and their helpers it was a day of hard work, but those who could attended the demonstrations that were held in many districts to emphasize the tremendous importance of the coming harvest. In a speech broadcast from Ormskirk, Mr. R. S. Hudson, the Minister of Agriculture, made an appeal for half-a-million volunteers to help with the harvest. "We are now nearing the climax of the year when," he said, "those long hours spent in all weathers in the fields reach their fulfilment. After Dunkirk, when every shipload of munitions gained meant the difference between life and death, the farmers of Britain, with equipment little better than what our armies had, grew a tonnage of food that staggered the world. Again this year we have sown to good purpose. We should reap a harvest which will live in the memory of man. We are starting this month on the toughest harvesting job in our history, a harvest which the farmers and their workers cannot hope to lift unaided. It will need the united efforts of all. From first to last it will probably mean the best part of 100,000,000 tons . . ."

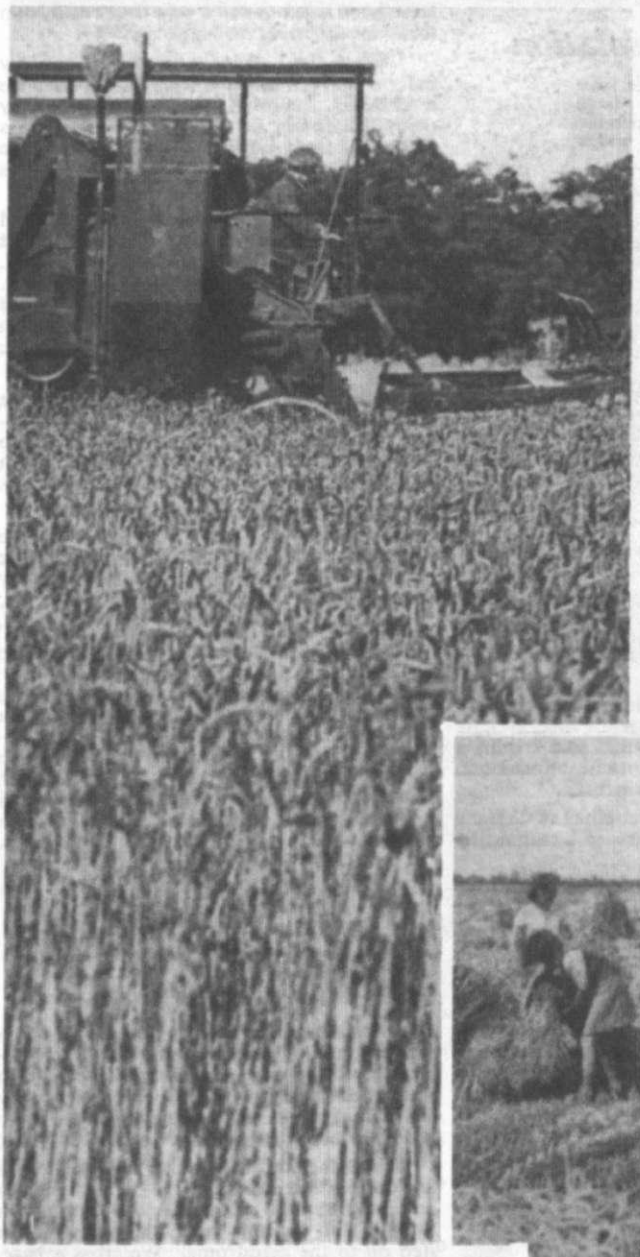
E. ROYSTON PIKE



INCREASE IN AREAS UNDER CULTIVATION in Britain, 1939-1943—prime factor in this year's bumper harvest. Total food production from the soil of this country has increased by 70 per cent since the outbreak of war—substantially easing the strain on Allied shipping resources.

Specially drawn for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED *from information supplied by the Ministry of Agriculture*

How Britain Reaped Her Record Victory Crops



BRINGING IN THE SHEAVES of this year's phenomenal harvest. A combine-harvester on the Crown Estate at Windsor (1) cuts, thrashes and sacks in one operation. The corn then goes to the mill (5). Horses have a stiff pull up the slope of a Hertfordshire barley field (2). At Abbey Wood, London office workers stook the corn crop (3). Sun-hatted Land-Girls stack oats at Pulborough, Sussex (4), and another raises drooped stalks to ensure the corn will be cut properly and not an ear be wasted (6).

Photos, Fox, E. W. Tattersall, Keystone

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

Catania Was a City of Chaos and Desolation

Both before and after the Germans fled from Catania astonishing scenes were witnessed in the city. As this front-line Sicilian pen-picture (dated August 6, 1943) by a Special Correspondent of The Daily Telegraph reveals, chaos reigned supreme. Not until some time after the entry of our troops on August 5 was order fully restored.

CATANIA has all the air of a town that has been frozen into immobility. Of all the conquered towns I have seen there has been none where the machinery of civic life has so completely come to a standstill. There were no signs of any shop or hotel being open. It was a complete contrast to Tripoli, where within five hours of the arrival of the first British troops British officers were booking bedrooms and being served lunch by white-coated waiters in restaurants.

But Catania is a city of desolation. Of its 250,000 population only 50,000 still remained when we arrived, and of these 30,000 habitually slept in air-raid shelters. Such has been the effect of our bombing—far severer than one had anticipated. This remnant population had been living a hand-to-mouth existence.

The departure of the last of the enemy troops signalized the breakdown of all semblance of order in Catania and the looting of shops began. It was worst in the Via Vittore Emanuele, immediately bordering on the central square, the Piazzo del Duomo.

Here the population had broken into the shops. Standing on a balcony outside the first-floor windows I saw men throwing down bale after bale to the populace below. There were women carrying armfuls of silk stockings, and their drab working-class clothes—only the poorest were left in Catania—were in sharp contrast to the newly-acquired gay silk scarves they wore around their heads or shoulders.

I had a long talk yesterday morning with the Mayor of Catania, the Marquis di San Giuliano, immediately after the formal surrender of the town. Troops made a peaceful advance into the place. There was no street fighting, despite reports to the contrary. The Mayor is a nephew of the Marquis di San Giuliano, formerly Ambassador to Britain, who as Foreign Secretary under Signor Salandra in 1914 was largely responsible for holding back Italy from entering the war on the side of Germany.

The Mayor had received many insults from Germans during their occupation of Catania. On one occasion his car had been stopped in the street and he had been covered with a machine-gun while the contents of his car were looted by German soldiers. On another occasion a number of German officers entered his house at 4 a.m. and insisted on billeting themselves there. As there were not enough beds for all they turned out three women relatives of the Mayor.

Finally, that very morning, as he drove into the town from his villa on the northern side of Catania, the Mayor was held up by German soldiers, who turned him out of his car, telling him that it was wanted for carrying the ammunition to a battery near by. He had to walk into town.

"Fortunately," he added, "it was only a few minutes before I met an officer commanding your advance troops, and I think I was able to give him some useful information about the location of that battery."

This deterioration in the conduct of German soldiers towards the civilians of a technically allied country has become very marked in recent months, particularly since the end of the Tunisian campaign. But the change in their behaviour towards civilians seems to have gone hand-in-hand with their realization that the war could no longer be won.

"When the Luftwaffe first came to Sicily early in 1941," said the Mayor, "they were a cheerful, laughing, jolly people. They enjoyed listening to the radio, which always recounted fresh German victories. The date they gave us then for the end of the war was July 1941.

"Then came the Russian campaign, and presently the Germans began to admit that they had miscalculated the strength of Russia. But they were still convinced of victory. Tunisia was the real shock. They had told me that they would keep their foothold in Africa. They were dumbfounded at the completeness of their defeat.

"After that their attitude was quite different. You never heard any more laughing and joking, and they did not seem to listen to the radio so much. Then they began to blame us Italians because the war was coming to Sicily."

During the last days of occupation the Germans unashamedly began looting. There was little food available by this time, so they carried off furniture, beds, blankets, sheets, pictures, knives, forks and household utensils.

As may be expected, tension between the Italians and Germans has become very marked. In another day or two fighting would probably have broken out between them in the streets of Catania. In the neighbouring village of Mascalucia the population forcibly opposed an attempt by German troops to requisition their mules. Several civilians were shot in resisting before Italian carabinieri arrived and drove off their allies.

I Saw the Americans Storm Munda Field

Munda, in New Georgia, fell to the Americans on August 6, 1943. How its much-bombed airport—of immense importance to the occupying Japanese—was stormed by U.S. infantry is vividly told by Walter Farr, Special Correspondent of The Daily Mail, from which this story is reprinted.

FIFTY yards ahead, through the tropical trees, I can see a crowd of ragged-looking Jap soldiers running wildly away in three directions and firing back at us with light machine-guns and rifles as they go. Stumbling over mounds of fallen coconuts and among American-made bomb craters, they dash back into temporary safety on high ground near Munda Point, where their mortars are firing to cover the retreat.

This is the end of Munda Field. Ignoring the mortar fire, we rush on to see whether our infantry unit or another, pouring down Bibolo Hill on our right, shall be first to step on to the aerodrome. We cross a bare, cratered ridge where heaps of dead Japs lay near their mangled guns and rifles.

Breathlessly we hurry over a Jap burial place where our last torrent of bombs a few hours ago threw up skeletons from their graves. On through scores of pillboxes and lines of trenches. Then comes a final stream of enemy machine-gun fire, throwing up clouds of coral near us and killing one of our officers.

Americans on either side of me advance with fixed bayonets. Here and there a man drops flat to fire at the fleeing Japs, or to fling grenades into a pillbox entrance, or into ruined native shacks—just to make sure. A rifle barks near me, and one Jap who could not run as fast as the others drops dead. More American riflemen pause to pump a few more rounds into the prone figure in case he is pretending death.

Someone shouts, "A plane, a plane! Look, there's a grounded plane right ahead of us!" Suddenly through the shell-torn trees there looms the tattered outline of a wrecked Zero. More Japs are running frantically away from it. Our main body halts in case of some last-minute enemy traps, but we move on.

HOW WIDESPREAD LOOTING by the civilian population followed the taking of Catania by our men is described by an eye witness in this page. After hours of amazing scenes British security troops restored order where the local police had been helpless. Here looters on balconies of houses throw booty to the clamouring crowd, most of whom look half-starved and unkempt. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

MUNDA POINT, vital Japanese air base in the Solomons, the first major objective to fall to the United Nations' forces in their offensive, begun on June 30, 1943 on a 680-mile front from New Guinea to New Georgia, where Munda is situated. How this much-bombed airfield fell (on August 6) is told in this and the facing page. *Photo, Associated Press*

Another wrecked Zero comes into view, then another, and another. Twenty of them in all. Four of us move forward, clear the under brush, skirt three huge bomb craters, and run towards the planes—straight on to Munda Field.

There, stretching 3,000 yards before us to Munda Point, is what is left of one of the world's most bombed airports. There are acres and acres of craters and practically every installation has been ground to pieces by the fury of our bombardment. Only an occasional window frame or doorway or a few charred papers mark the place which the Japs thought would be the nerve centre of a huge aerial armada which would drive us back towards Australia.

I Power-Dived Faster Than Sound Can Travel

The fastest man alive, Lieut.-Col. C. S. Hough, of Michigan, Technical Director of the 8th Fighter Command, tells how he power-dived vertically at 780 m.p.h. from more than eight miles above the English countryside to test a fighting machine. His story appears here by arrangement with The Daily Mail.

I GUESS I shall remember more than anything else the wonderful experience of seeing from that height of 43,000 ft. practically the whole of England spread out under me on a perfect English day. I stayed up there for a little while just to look around. I saw right across to the Bristol Channel on one side and away to the Wash on the other. I saw the Mersey gleaming, and the brighter Bristol Channel.

I took a glance at the North Sea and then at the English Channel and away across to Calais and the Cherbourg peninsula. Gee! What a thrill it was to see the whole of one country at once! Well, then I had to get along, for my cabin wasn't supercharged for climbing so high, and I wasn't getting enough oxygen. It was pretty cold up there too—60 degrees below zero (Fahrenheit), and all the heat I got was from the twin engines of my Lightning plane. So it was time I really got moving.

I didn't think about taking the plunge—I just put her nose down and went for the earth, gradually gaining maximum speed. I suppose it was about five seconds after reaching my ceiling that I started to make the power dive and I was diving for 25 seconds at 1,000 ft. a second. In the middle 15 seconds my hands were off the controls—it was a bit risky, I admit—and I was writing data with my eyes glued to the instruments that told me of my speed and other things. It sure was a thrill when I realized at one point that I was travelling faster than the sound of my engines and faster than the speed of my propellers.

I wasn't conscious of any sensation in particular—only the rather comfortable feeling of going through *solid* air. There was the noise of it like the roaring and rushing of a sea past my cabin and the shrill screaming of the propellers. When I judged that I had reached the limit of possible velocity with the engines full on I thought I would "feather" the propellers to give me even a little more speed.

But as I began to reduce power the nose of the plane started to turn inwards on an outside loop. That cured me pretty quick of any desire to "feather" the propellers. I held on to maximum speed for 10 sec. I had no sensation of speed at all, for there was nothing to impress it on my notice. If I had passed anything going down or could have kept my eyes on the earth leaping up to meet me, it would have been different. When I had got to within 18,000 ft. of the ground I guessed it was time to let the old instinct of self-preservation have its way. So I started to flatten out. This was the really exciting part.

I had only 18 sec. to go before reaching the ground, and I had to act quickly and at the same time very carefully. If I had pulled out suddenly I wouldn't have been here to tell the tale. However, I got her out in a nice curve—and that was unpleasant enough. I didn't black out—I just greyed out. Everything went grey, but I didn't for an instant lose consciousness. I felt as if some hefty fellow was sitting tight on my head and pushing me back from the way the plane was going, and when I tried to move my arm it was so heavy I thought I'd need a crane to lift it.

My whole body felt like lead. Now I could see the ground and the neatly divided fields—and all at once I became conscious of speed. After flattening out I did a little climb that eased matters a bit. A few seconds later I landed. How did I feel? Oh, fine. I just breathed a little prayer of thanksgiving and went into the office to write my report.

I undertook the test dive in the ordinary course of my research work. In fact I decided to go up quite suddenly—and only half an hour before. I had my usual breakfast—toast and coffee and a cigarette.

You see, it sort of helps a fighter pilot to know just how much his plane can stand.

LIEUT.-COL. C. S. HOUGH, of Michigan, with two of his ground staff and the plane in which he flew faster than sound. He describes his unique exploit in this page. *Photo, Planet News*

From a Prison Camp We Tramped 1,000 Miles

Two Dutch submarine officers escaped from Hongkong and tramped 1,000 miles across China to a British Army outpost in Burma. One of them, Lieut. Roel Hordyk, tells their story, given here by courtesy of The Observer.

WE were taken prisoner in December, 1941, when our submarine was sunk during an attack on an enemy convoy at the time of the Japanese invasion of the Malay peninsula. But within two days of being put in the prison camp we escaped.

How we escaped must still remain secret, but shortly before dawn on the third morning we were on the outskirts of a town. By hiding in ditches and behind bushes we eluded the Japanese patrols and reached the hills, where we stayed for seven days, and then, because we were getting weak from want of food, we decided to try to find a boat to take us to the mainland.

I had copied a map of China and knew roughly where we wanted to go. So on the seventh night we went down to the coast and luckily found a boat. The fifty-mile row to the mainland took three or four days, as we had to make our way from island to island by night.

Right from the start the Chinese helped us. They were wonderful. One island was inhabited by a small community of poor fishermen. After sharing their rice and fish with us they had a collection and gave us half a Chinese dollar. And that was all the money we had throughout our trek (when we finally arrived at our destination we still had it). We reached the mainland at a place occupied by Chinese guerillas. Their sentries surrounded us and took us to their leader.

We explained who we were and he gave us a "safe conduct"—a small piece of paper with Chinese characters written on it. It worked like a charm. Whenever we showed it people fell over themselves to help us. I pointed out to the guerilla leader on my map where I wanted to go, and he sent a man to put us on the road. And then our trek began in earnest.

There were a lot of evacuees on the road and we followed them. Mostly they were rich Chinese travelling with twenty or more coolies carrying their belongings. The Chinese walk fast and they never seem to tire. We must have averaged about 20 or more miles a day. The roads they took led up into the mountains. They were little more than rough, rock-strewn tracks, twisting and curling for mile after mile.

Cold and boredom were the two worst things with which we had to contend. The pace was fast, but after a few days we got used to it. We walked in silence most of the time, just concentrating on walking.

Our route led from hamlet to hamlet, clusters of two or three poor wooden huts perched precariously on the mountain rocks. Misty rain soaked our clothes—khaki battle-dress—and tennis shoes, and icy winds cut through them. On the bare heights we had to rely on the kindness of the villagers to feed us. Nothing could grow in such wild country. We ate practically nothing but rice throughout the journey.

Most of the towns and villages through which we passed had been bombed, and many of the Chinese had rebuilt their houses three or four times, only to have them shattered again by Japanese planes. Ultimately, after nine weeks, we reached a British Army outpost. There we were taken to a hotel, where we had our first bath and European food since our capture more than three months before. Then we were flown to Calcutta.

LIEUT. ROEL HORDYK, of the Royal Netherlands Navy, who tells in this page the story of his 1,000-mile trek to freedom across Japanese-occupied China.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

AUGUST 4, Wednesday *1,432nd day*

Sicily.—Capture announced of Caronia by U.S. troops.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops launched big offensive on Byelgorod front.

Australasia.—Revealed that American troops had reached Munda airfield and had occupied part of Bibolo Hill.

AUGUST 5, Thursday *1,433rd day*

Sicily.—Catania and Paterno captured by 8th Army; island of Ustica occupied by Americans.

Mediterranean.—Naples pounded.

Russian Front.—German bastions of Orel and Byelgorod taken by storm; Marshal Stalin ordered the firing of 12 salvoes of 120 Moscow guns in celebration.

AUGUST 6, Friday *1,434th day*

Sicily.—Troina, erroneously reported taken on Aug. 3, fell to Americans; fall of Gagliano announced; 125,000 prisoners taken to date.

Russian Front.—Announced in three days of Byelgorod offensive to date, Russians penetrated enemy defences to depth of 15-37 m. on 44-m. front. Kromy, 25 m. S.W. of Orel, captured.

Australasia.—Munda air base captured. Jap cruiser and two destroyers sunk in naval engagement with U.S. ships between Kolombangara and Vella Lavella.

AUGUST 7, Saturday *1,435th day*

Sicily.—9th Army captured Adrano and Belpasso.

Russian Front.—Graivoron captured by Soviet troops in Kharkov advance.

Burma.—Maungdaw raided by R.A.F.

Air.—N. Italian cities of Milan, Genoa and Turin heavily bombed.

AUGUST 8, Sunday *1,436th day*

Sicily.—San Fratello and Sant' Agata captured by Americans; amphibious U.S. force landed east of Cape Orlando, capturing 1,500 prisoners. Announced fall of Biancavilla to 8th Army.

Russian Front.—In Bryansk sector Russians captured 130 places; advances of 8-10 m. made in Kharkov direction.

AUGUST 9, Monday *1,437th day*

Sicily.—Announced capture of Acireale by 8th Army. Fortresses pounded communications in Messina area.

Mediterranean.—Castelammare di Stabia in Gulf of Naples and railway bridges at Cape Vaticano (Italy) bombarded by Royal Navy.

Air.—Twin Rhineland towns of Mannheim-Ludwigshaven heavily attacked.

AUGUST 10, Tuesday *1,438th day*

Sicily.—Announced Bronte captured, and union made between 7th U.S. Army and 8th Army near Bronte and Cesaro. Second U.S. amphibious force landed east of Cape Orlando, establishing a bridgehead.

Russian Front.—In Bryansk sector, Khotinets captured by Russians.

Air.—Nuremberg (S. Germany) plastered with over 1,500 tons of bombs.

General.—Announced arrival in Canada of Mr. Churchill, Lord Leathers and British Chiefs of Staff.

AUGUST 11, Wednesday *1,439th day*

Sicily.—Announced fall of Guardia. Reported German evacuation of Sicily in progress covered by A.A. barrage.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops cut the Kharkov-Poltava railway line and took Akhtyrka and Krasnokutsk.

General.—Mr. Churchill attended a session of the Canadian War Cabinet.

AUGUST 12, Thursday *1,440th day*

Russian Front.—In Kharkov drive Russians captured Chuguyev; advances of 10-12 m. made in Bryansk region.

Air.—Gelsenkirchen (Ruhr), Wesseling and Bonn (nr. Cologne) heavily raided by Fortresses. Milan (over 1,000 tons dropped) and Turin heavily raided. Berlin attacked by Mosquitoes.

AUGUST 13, Friday *1,441st day*

Sicily.—U.S. troops entered Randazzo, Naso and Brolo; announced capture of Riposto, Giarre, and Milo by 8th Army. Floresta and Piraino by Americans. U.S. warships bombarded Milazzo.

Mediterranean.—Rome bombed in daylight by U.S. Fortresses led by Maj.-Gen. J. H. Doolittle; 400-500 tons of bombs dropped.

Russian Front.—Russians announced opening of new offensive drive against Smolensk in which Spasdemensk fell. In Briansk sector Navlya occupied.

Australasia.—Balikpapan (Borneo) was raided by Liberators in 2,500-mile round trip. Heaviest raid to date on Salamaua (New Guinea).

Air.—Wiener Neustadt works, 27 m. S. of Vienna, bombed by Liberators.

AUGUST 14, Saturday *1,442nd day*

Sicily.—Taormina taken by 8th Army.

Italy.—Badoglio Govt. declared Rome an open city.

Russian Front.—German tanks and infantry counter-attacked at Kharkov.

Air.—Milan target for heavy attack by Lancasters; Breda armament works main objective. Mosquitoes bombed Berlin.

Sea.—Announced in three months May-July 90 U-boats destroyed and that during 1943 new shipping completed by Allies exceeded all sinkings by 3,000,000 tons.

AUGUST 15, Sunday *1,443rd day*

Sicily.—Announced occupation of Fiumefreddo, Piedimonte and Mazzara; U.S. troops reached Oliveri.

Russian Front.—In Bryansk area Russians captured Karachev.

Australasia.—Vella Lavella (Solomons), captured.

Air.—Milan bombed in longest duration raid; over 100 4,000-pounders dropped. Mosquitoes raided Berlin.

General.—Mr. Churchill returned to Quebec from visit to President Roosevelt.

AUGUST 16, Monday *1,444th day*

Sicily.—Announced fall of Kaggi and Castiglione; 8th Army Commandos landed near Messina, U.S. force near Milazzo.

Russian Front.—In Bryansk area, Russians captured Zhizdra and Malye Luki. In Smolensk sector Tserkovshchina taken.

Air.—French engineering works at Denain, Le Bourget (Paris airport) and other airfields raided by Fortress, Ventura, Typhoon and Marauder bombers. Turin heavily bombed at night.

AUGUST 17, Tuesday *1,445th day*

Sicily.—Island completely conquered after 38-day campaign. Messina captured by Americans; gun duel began across Messina Straits.

Mediterranean.—Istres and Salon airfields near Marseilles raided by Fortresses—first time targets in France attacked from Mediterranean bases.

Australasia.—Wewak (New Guinea) airfields bombed; 120 enemy planes destroyed.

Air.—Schweinfurt, E. of Frankfert, and Regensburg, S. of Nuremberg, pounded by Fortresses. Peenemünde research works N.W. of Stettin blasted; Berlin attacked by Mosquitoes.

General.—Revealed that H.M. the King in H.M.S. Duke of York led the Home Fleet to battle practice in the North Sea during a 4-day visit. Announced arrival of President Roosevelt at Quebec.

Flash-backs

1940

August 4. Italians invaded Brit. Somaliland.

August 5. Hargeisa captured by Italians.

August 8. Battle of Britain opened; 60 German aircraft down.

August 15. 180 German planes destroyed over Britain. First R.A.F. raid on Turin and Milan.

1941

August 7. First Soviet air raid on Berlin.

August 12. Six Blenheim squadrons raided Cologne by day.

August 14. Announced that Atlantic Charter formulated in Churchill-Roosevelt meeting aboard H.M.S. Prince of Wales and U.S. cruiser Augusta.

1942.

August 7. U.S. troops landed on Guadalcanal.

August 11. Aircraft carrier Eagle sunk in Mediterranean convoy action.

August 12. Mr. Churchill arrived in Moscow.

August 17. First all U.S. raid on Rouen.

Editor's Postscript

FOUR Years! Do they seem to have been more like forty? Or do you ask yourself, "Can it really be four years since we heard Mr. Chamberlain on Sunday, September 3, 1939, tell us we were again at war with Germany?" That is rather how I feel myself. Crowded with events as these four years have been, there seems to have been an emptiness about them when I compare them with periods of peace. War stops so many activities. It reduces us to a dead level. One day is so much like other days. I felt between 1914 and 1918 as if a slice was being cut out of my life. I haven't had that feeling this time, but, as I look back to that Sunday I have mentioned, the years appear to have slid by quickly and to have left few outstanding memories behind them. There was the night when Chamberlain announced his resignation, the week during which it became plain that France was out of it, the days that saw the magnificent evacuation from Dunkirk, the June evening when we heard that Hitler had invaded Russia, the December morning that brought the news of Pearl Harbour. But mostly the triumphs, like the Battle of London and Tunisia and Stalingrad, had been so long anticipated that their effect when they came was blunted. Now there is a wave of optimism bearing people up. Things look good certainly. But I fear the end is not yet.

WAR teaches us to value many benefits we take for granted at other times. Light, for example. Have you ever before set so much store by it as you do now? We used to take it as a matter of course. It was always there. It always would be there. Now we know we were wrong. We look back longingly—and forward hopefully as well—to the days when we could have all we wanted. That extra second hour of Summer Time, which we have recently had to knock off, seems a terrible deprivation. Instead of being able to do without artificial light till nearly ten, we have to black out and switch on before nine. It's no use complaining; it has to be done. But the prospect of the days shortening steadily, until we have to get up in the dark and must draw black curtains or fix screens between four and five in the evening, is not a pleasant one. As usual, Shakespeare supplies the appropriate comment:

It so falls out,
That what we have we prize not to the worth
Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack 'd and lost,
Why, then we rack the value, then we find
The virtue that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours.

We feel that about daylight; but there are vast numbers on the continent of Europe who now value freedom as they never valued it before. It seemed to them part of the natural order of their world. They would not lift a finger to safeguard it. They kept on repeating parrot-like that no one meant them any harm. Now they realize what they have lost and look to the United Nations to restore it to them.

I MUST say I thought some of the harsh comments on the unfortunate folk who crowded the railway stations during the early part of last month were ill-considered and unnecessary. The Minister, for instance, who remarked "they deserved all they got," showed himself unable to imagine how factory workers, toiling in grime day after day and going home to little stuffy rooms in city streets, long for the freshness and space of the countryside and the countless smiles, as the Greek poet put it, of the blue sunlit sea. I think these war workers have the hardest lot of all the millions who are putting their effort towards victory. In the Services there is always the possibility of death or wounds, but there are change of scene, adventure, robust health, and the chance of winning distinction. The need of the factory workers for holidays ought to have been foreseen and provided for. It could have been done. I heard one of the harsh critics say that holidays are a "modern craze." His grandparents "never took one in their lives." But there is no resemblance between the conditions even of sixty or seventy years ago and those of today. It was then easy to get into fields and woods. Work was more interesting and less wearisome. Most workers made "things," not bits of things. Now a little regular relaxation is essential to a contented life.

GENERAL KONSTANTIN ROKOSSOVSKY, victor of Orel. His appointment to the Kursk front three months ago was preceded by his routing of the Nazis before Moscow in December 1941, and his sensational triumph over Field-Marshal von Paulus at Stalingrad in January, 1943. He is 45. *Photo, Pictorial Press*

IN these times it is easier than at others to distinguish between people who know how to behave and those who don't. Especially in shops. At other times all who serve in them have to be polite. They would lose custom or get the sack if they were not. Now the positions are reversed. The customer has to ingratiate himself, even to fawn and flatter sometimes. The sales-people have the upper hand. Many still bear themselves courteously and kindly, but some do the opposite. They seem to take delight in saying they have not got what you want, and even laugh at you for expecting to find it. They refuse haughtily to let you have what is concealed under the counter. I don't fancy they will be very popular when things are normal again. These are, however, only a small number. On the whole, British people manage wonderfully well to keep their tempers sweet as well as their upper lips stiff. In Germany appeals have been made for a long time past for less irritability, less rudeness in public. Goebbels has begged them to show a stronger spirit of comradeship. But when one is afraid one is always nervy and perturbed. And the Germans have been afraid for at least two years now. A Polish prisoner of war who escaped and got to America reports that in the summer of 1941 they were saying, "It must be over soon. Another year of this would be impossible." What must they be saying now?

I HAVE often been asked the origin of the expression "browned off," which was heard so constantly among soldiers and R.A.F. men during the first two years of war. Into every article about them it was introduced. What did it mean? In a little book on R.A.F. slang (It's a Piece of Cake, by Squadron-Ldr. Ward-Jackson, published by Sylvan Press, 2s.) I find the statement that "it has been used in the Service for at least 25 years," and that its origin is "problematical." I suppose that means it started among airmen. Another booklet on Service Slang generally (compiled by J. L. Hunt and A. G. Pringle, published by Faber & Faber, 2s. 6d.) says "it has long been the approved answer to any inquiry as to one's health," and treats it as being common to the Services generally. As a verb active it can be used in such a sentence as "The sergeant-major browned him off proper"; but to be "browned off" is usually to be "fed up," or bored with something or somebody. The metaphor is said to be taken from cooking. This sounds more likely than the suggestion that it refers to "the notable lobster-tan which all soldiers, sailors and airmen seem to acquire."

ANOTHER term of mysterious origin is "to prang." This, I gathered from the conversation of pilots, meant, as the R.A.F. book says, "to damage, destroy or wreck." Hamburg was badly "pranged." But the other book defines "prang" as being used when a pilot crashes or smashes his plane. It is apparently a sound-word, expressing the sort of noise that metal aircraft make when they hit the ground too hard. Then it extended to enemy targets. "It's a piece of cake" explains itself—to anyone who likes cake. "In a spot" is clearly abbreviated from "spot of bother." An aircraft is a "kite"; bombs are "groceries" to be delivered; an R.A.F. officer is a "gussie"; a perfect landing on an airfield is a "daisy-cutter." If you make a forced landing in the sea, you fall into "the drink"; barrage balloons are known as "pigs"; "scran" and "rum" in the Navy signify "good" and "bad." The naval expression which means "quite correct" is given as "tiggerty-boo;" it more often has the sound of "tickety-boo;" it comes from a Hindustani word. Service Slang ignores it. Was "wangle" originally an Army word? It is a perfect example of meaning expressed by sound. Not many new words or phrases have come out of this war. Probably this is accounted for by things being taken more seriously, grimly even, than they were last time. You have to be light-hearted to invent slang.

A reminder may be given here that previous references have been made, at some length, to this subject of Service terms and slang in page 95 of this volume of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED and in page 767, volume Six.

Our 'Desert Rats' Capture Sicilian Railway

MEN OF THE 8th ARMY are here charging across a railway cutting in Sicily to join in the attack on an enemy-held station. Just one striking example of several ways in which our veterans of N. African desert fighting adapted themselves to quite different conditions entailed by Sicilian terrain. How the station was taken at the bayonet point is shown in other photographs in p. 196. *Photo, British Official*

Printed in England and published every alternate Friday by the Proprietors, THE AMALGAMATED PRESS, LTD., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Registered for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. News Agency, Ltd.—September 3, 1943. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; and for South Africa: Central S.S. *Editorial Address:* JOHN CARPENTER HOUSE, WHITEFRIARS, LONDON, E.C.4.